

PRESIDENT NELSON

COLLECTION OF GENERAL CONFERENCE TALKS

April 2018 – October 2023

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Introductory Remarks

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2018 | General Priesthood session | [Link](#)

We announce a significant restructuring of our Melchizedek Priesthood quorums to accomplish the work of the Lord more effectively.

Thank you, Brother Holmes, for your important message.

Dear brethren, we deeply miss President Thomas S. Monson and Elder Robert D. Hales. Yet we “all press on in the work of the Lord.”¹

I am very grateful for each man who bears the holy priesthood. You are the hope of our Redeemer, who desires “that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world.”² He wants all of His ordained sons to represent Him, to speak for Him, to act for Him, and to bless the lives of God’s children throughout the world, to the end “that faith also might increase in [all] the earth.”³

Some of you serve where the Church has been established for generations. Others serve where the Church is relatively new. For some, your wards are large. For others, your branches are small and distances are great. Regardless of your individual circumstances, each of you is a member of a priesthood quorum with a divine mandate to learn and to teach, to love and to serve others.

Tonight we announce a significant restructuring of our Melchizedek Priesthood quorums to accomplish the work of the Lord more effectively. In each ward, the high priests and the elders will now be combined into one elders quorum. This adjustment will greatly enhance the capacity and the ability of men who bear the priesthood to serve others. Prospective elders will be welcomed in and fellowshiped by that quorum. In each stake, the stake presidency will continue to preside over the stake high priests quorum. But the composition of that quorum will be based on current priesthood callings, as will be explained later.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson and Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles will now teach us more about these important adjustments.

These modifications have been under study for many months. We have felt a pressing need to improve the way we care for our members and report our contacts with them.

To do that better, we need to strengthen our priesthood quorums to give greater direction to the ministering of love and support that the Lord intends for His Saints.

These adjustments are inspired of the Lord. As we implement them, we will be even more effective than we have ever been previously.

We are engaged in the work of Almighty God. Jesus is the Christ! We are His humble servants! God bless you, brethren, as we learn of and do our duty, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. "Let Us All Press On," *Hymns*, no. 243.

2. Doctrine and Covenants 1:20.

3. Doctrine and Covenants 1:21.

Ministering with the Power and Authority of God

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2018 | General Priesthood session | [Link](#)

We will minister in His name, with His power and authority, and with His loving-kindness.

My beloved brethren, thank you for your devotion to the Lord and His holy work. It is truly a joy to be with you. As a new First Presidency, we thank you for your prayers and for your sustaining efforts. We are grateful for your lives and for your service to the Lord. Your devotion to duty and your selfless service are just as important in your callings as ours are in our callings. Through a lifetime of service in this Church, I have learned that it really doesn't matter where one serves. What the Lord cares about is how one serves.

I express deep gratitude for President Thomas S. Monson, who was an example to me for more than 50 years. And for his counselors, President Henry B. Eyring and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, I express profound admiration. I commend them for their service to the Lord and His prophets. Both of these devoted servants have received new assignments. They continue to serve with vigor and commitment. I honor and love them both.

It is a remarkable blessing to serve in the Lord's true and living Church with His authority and power. The restoration of the priesthood of God, including the keys of the priesthood, opens to worthy Latter-day Saints the greatest of all spiritual blessings. We see those blessings flowing to women, men, and children throughout the world.

We see faithful women who understand the power inherent in their callings and in their endowment and other temple ordinances. These women know how to call upon the powers of heaven to protect and strengthen their husbands, their children, and others they love. These are spiritually strong women who lead, teach, and minister fearlessly in their callings with the power and authority of God!¹ How thankful I am for them!

Likewise, we see faithful men who live up to their privileges as bearers of the priesthood. They lead and serve by sacrifice in the Lord's way with love, kindness, and

patience. They bless, guide, protect, and strengthen others by the power of the priesthood they hold. They bring miracles to those they serve while they keep their own marriages and families safe. They shun evil and are mighty elders in Israel.² I am most thankful for them!

Now, may I voice a concern? It is this: Too many of our brothers and sisters do not fully understand the concept of priesthood power and authority. They act as though they would rather satisfy their own selfish desires and appetites than use the power of God to bless His children.

I fear that too many of our brothers and sisters do not grasp the privileges that could be theirs.³ Some of our brethren, for example, act like they do not understand what the priesthood is and what it enables them to do. Let me give you some specific examples.

Not long ago, I attended a sacrament meeting in which a new baby was to be given a name and a father's blessing. The young father held his precious infant in his arms, gave her a name, and then offered a beautiful prayer. But he did not give that child a blessing. That sweet baby girl got a name but no blessing! That dear elder did not know the difference between a prayer and a priesthood blessing. With his priesthood authority and power, he could have blessed his infant, but he did not. I thought, "What a missed opportunity!"

Let me cite some other examples. We know of brethren who set sisters apart as Primary, Young Women, or Relief Society leaders and teachers but fail to bless them—to bless them with the power to fulfill their callings. They give only admonitions and instructions. We see a worthy father who fails to give his wife and his children priesthood blessings when that is exactly what they need. Priesthood power has been restored to this earth, and yet far too many brothers and sisters go through terrible trials in life without ever receiving a true priesthood blessing. What a tragedy! That's a tragedy that we can eliminate.

Brethren, we hold the holy priesthood of God! We have His authority to bless His people. Just think of the remarkable assurance the Lord gave us when He said, "Whomsoever you bless I will bless."⁴ It is our privilege to act in the name of Jesus Christ to bless God's children according to His will for them. Stake presidents and bishops, please ensure that every member of the quorums within your stewardship understands how to give a priesthood blessing—including the personal worthiness and spiritual preparation required to call fully upon the power of God.⁵

To all brethren holding the priesthood, I invite you to inspire members to keep their covenants, fast and pray, study the scriptures, worship in the temple, and serve with faith as men and women of God. We can help all to see with the eye of faith that obedience and righteousness will draw them closer to Jesus Christ, allow them to enjoy the companionship of the Holy Ghost, and experience joy in life!

A hallmark of the Lord's true and living Church will always be an organized, directed effort to minister to individual children of God and their families.⁶ Because it is His Church, we as His servants will minister to the one, just as He did.⁷ We will minister in His name, with His power and authority, and with His loving-kindness.

An experience I had more than 60 years ago in Boston taught me just how powerful the privilege of ministering one-on-one can be. I was then a resident surgeon at the Massachusetts General Hospital—on duty every day, every other night, and every other weekend. I had limited time for my wife, our four children, and Church activity. Nonetheless, our branch president assigned me to visit the home of Wilbur and Leonora Cox with the hope that Brother Cox might come back into activity in the Church. He and Leonora had been sealed in the temple.⁸ Yet Wilbur had not participated for many years.

My companion and I went to their home. As we entered, Sister Cox welcomed us warmly,⁹ but Brother Cox abruptly walked into another room and closed the door.

I went to the closed door and knocked. After a moment, I heard a muffled "Come in." I opened the door to find Brother Cox sitting beside an array of amateur radio equipment. In that small room, he lit up a cigar. Clearly, my visit was not all that welcome.

I gazed about the room with wonderment and said, "Brother Cox, I have always wanted to learn more about amateur radio work. Would you be willing to teach me about it? I'm sorry I can't stay any longer tonight, but could I come back another time?"

He hesitated for a moment and then said yes. That was the beginning of what became a wonderful friendship. I returned and he taught me. I began to love and respect him. Through our subsequent visits, the greatness of this man emerged. We became very good friends, as did our dear eternal companions. Then, with the passage of time, our family moved away. Local leaders continued to nurture the Cox family.¹⁰

About eight years after that first visit, the Boston Stake was created.¹¹ Can you guess who its first stake president was? Yes! Brother Cox! During subsequent years, he also served as a mission president and a temple president.

Years later, I, as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, was assigned to create a new stake in Sanpete County, Utah. During the usual interviews, I was pleasantly surprised to encounter again my dear friend Brother Cox! I felt impressed to call him as the new stake patriarch. After I ordained him, we embraced each other and wept. People in the room were wondering why these two grown men were crying. But we knew. And Sister Cox knew. Ours were tears of joy! We silently remembered the incredible journey of love and repentance that began more than 30 years ago, one night in their home.

The account doesn't end there. Brother and Sister Cox's family grew to include 3 children, 20 grandchildren, and 54 great-grandchildren. Add to that their impact on hundreds of missionaries, on thousands more in the temple, and on hundreds more who received patriarchal blessings at the hands of Wilbur Cox. His and Leonora's influence will continue to ripple through many generations throughout the world.

Experiences such as this with Wilbur and Leonora Cox occur every week—hopefully, every day—within this Church. Dedicated servants of the Lord Jesus Christ carry out His work, with His power and authority.

Brethren, there are doors we can open, priesthood blessings we can give, hearts we can heal, burdens we can lift, testimonies we can strengthen, lives we can save, and joy we can bring into the homes of the Latter-day Saints—all because we hold the priesthood of God. We are the men who have been “called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of [our] exceeding faith,” to do this work.¹²

Tonight I invite you literally to rise up with me in our great eternal brotherhood. When I name your priesthood office, please stand and remain standing. Deacons, please arise! Teachers, arise! Priests! Bishops! Elders! High priests! Patriarchs! Seventies! Apostles!

Now, brethren, will you please remain standing and join with our chorus in singing all three verses of “Rise Up, O Men of God.”¹³ While you sing, think of your duty as God's mighty army to help prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord. This is our charge. This is our privilege. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Russell M. Nelson, “A Plea to My Sisters,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 96.

2. See Russell M. Nelson, “The Price of Priesthood Power,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2016, 66–69; see also Alma 13:7–8; Doctrine and Covenants 84:17–20, 35–38.

3. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:19–22; 107:18–19; Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 14:30–31 (in the Bible appendix).

4. Doctrine and Covenants 132:47.

5. The connection between the power of the priesthood and personal righteousness is developed more fully in Russell M. Nelson, "The Price of Priesthood Power," 66–69; see also Doctrine and Covenants 121:34–37, 41–44.
6. The essential role of an organized, directed effort to minister to individuals and families is evident wherever and whenever the Church of Jesus Christ has been established. See, for example, Luke 10:1–20; Acts 6:1–6; Ephesians 4:11–14; Mosiah 18:9, 18–19, 27–29; Doctrine and Covenants 20:42, 51, 57.
7. See 3 Nephi 17:9–10, 20–21.
8. Manti Utah Temple, June 15, 1937.
9. Leonora's fasting and praying every Monday for years surely had a powerful influence for good.
10. In 1954, branch president Ira Terry called Wilbur to be the branch Sunday School superintendent. Wilbur accepted the calling and dropped forever all habits contrary to the Word of Wisdom. He devoted the rest of his life in service to the Savior's work.
11. In 1962.
12. Alma 13:3.
13. "Rise Up, O Men of God," *Hymns*, no. 324.

Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2018 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

In coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost.

What a glorious privilege it has been to celebrate Easter with you on this Sunday of general conference! Nothing could be more fitting than to commemorate the most important event that ever occurred on this earth by worshipping the most important being who ever walked this earth. In this, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we worship Him who commenced His infinite Atonement in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was willing to suffer for the sins and weaknesses of each of us, which suffering caused Him “to bleed at every pore.”¹ He was crucified on Calvary’s cross² and rose the third day as the first resurrected being of our Heavenly Father’s children. I love Him and testify that He lives! It is He who leads and guides His Church.

Without our Redeemer’s infinite Atonement, not one of us would have hope of ever returning to our Heavenly Father. Without His Resurrection, death would be the end. Our Savior’s Atonement made eternal life a possibility and immortality a reality for all.

It is because of His transcendent mission and the peace He grants His followers that my wife, Wendy, and I felt comfort late on January 2, 2018, when we were awakened by a phone call telling us that President Thomas S. Monson had stepped through the veil.



How we miss President Monson! We honor his life and his legacy. A spiritual giant, he left an indelible imprint upon all who knew him and upon the Church that he loved.

On Sunday, January 14, 2018, in the upper room of the Salt Lake Temple, the First Presidency was reorganized in the simple yet sacred pattern established by the Lord. Then, at yesterday morning's solemn assembly, members of the Church throughout the world raised their hands to confirm the earlier action taken by the Apostles. I am humbly grateful for your sustaining support.

I am also grateful for those upon whose shoulders I stand. It has been my privilege to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for 34 years and to know personally 10 of the 16 previous Presidents of the Church. I learned much from each of them.

I also owe much to my forebears. All eight of my great-grandparents were converts to the Church in Europe. Each of these stalwart souls sacrificed everything to come to Zion. During subsequent generations, however, not all my ancestors remained so committed. As a result, I was not raised in a gospel-centered home.



I adored my parents. They meant the world to me and taught me crucial lessons. I cannot thank them enough for the happy homelife they created for me and my siblings. And yet, even as a boy, I knew I was missing something. One day I jumped on the streetcar and went to an LDS bookstore to find a book about the Church. I loved learning about the gospel.

As I came to understand the Word of Wisdom, I wanted my parents to live that law. So, one day when I was very young, I went to our basement and smashed on the concrete floor every bottle of liquor! I expected my father to punish me, but he never said a word.

As I matured and began to understand the magnificence of Heavenly Father's plan, I often said to myself, "I don't want one more Christmas present! I just want to be sealed to my parents." That longed-for event did not happen until my parents were past 80,

and then it did happen. I cannot fully express the joy that I felt that day,³ and each day I feel that joy of their sealing and my being sealed to them.



In 1945, while I was in medical school, I married Dantzel White in the Salt Lake Temple. She and I were blessed with nine splendid daughters and one precious son. Today our ever-growing family is one of the greatest joys of my life.



In 2005, after nearly 60 years of marriage, my dear Dantzel was unexpectedly called home. For a season, my grief was almost immobilizing. But the message of Easter and the promise of resurrection sustained me.



Then the Lord brought Wendy Watson to my side. We were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple on April 6, 2006. How I love her! She is an extraordinary woman—a great blessing to me, to our family, and to the entire Church.

Each of these blessings has come as a result of seeking and heeding the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Said President Lorenzo Snow, “This is the grand privilege of every Latter-day Saint ... that it is our right to have the manifestations of the Spirit every day of our lives.”⁴

One of the things the Spirit has repeatedly impressed upon my mind since my new calling as President of the Church is how willing the Lord is to reveal His mind and will. The privilege of receiving revelation is one of the greatest gifts of God to His children.

Through the manifestations of the Holy Ghost, the Lord will assist us in all our righteous pursuits. I remember in an operating room, I have stood over a patient—unsure how to perform an unprecedented procedure—and experienced the Holy Ghost diagramming the technique in my mind.⁵

To strengthen my proposal to Wendy, I said to her, “I know about revelation and how to receive it.” To her credit—and, as I have come to learn, typical of her—she had already sought and received her own revelation about us, which gave her the courage to say yes.

As a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, I prayed daily for revelation and gave thanks to the Lord every time He spoke to my heart and mind.

Imagine the miracle of it! Whatever our Church calling, we can pray to our Heavenly Father and receive guidance and direction, be warned about dangers and distractions, and be enabled to accomplish things we simply could not do on our own. If we will truly receive the Holy Ghost and learn to discern and understand His promptings, we will be guided in matters large and small.

When I recently faced the daunting task of choosing two counselors, I wondered how I could possibly choose just two from twelve men whom I love and respect.

Because I know that good inspiration is based upon good information, I prayerfully met one-on-one with each Apostle.⁶ I then sequestered myself in a private room in the temple and sought the Lord’s will. I testify that the Lord instructed me to select President Dallin H. Oaks and President Henry B. Eyring to serve as my counselors in the First Presidency.

In like manner, I testify that the Lord inspired the call of Elder Gerrit W. Gong and Elder Ulisses Soares to be ordained as His Apostles. I and we welcome them to this unique brotherhood of service.

When we convene as a Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, our meeting rooms become rooms of revelation. The Spirit is palpably present. As we wrestle with complex matters, a thrilling process unfolds as each Apostle freely expresses his thoughts and point of view. Though we may differ in our initial perspectives, the love we feel for each other is constant. Our unity helps us to discern the Lord’s will for His Church.

In our meetings, the majority never rules! We listen prayerfully to one another and talk with each other until we are united. Then when we have reached complete accord, the unifying influence of the Holy Ghost is spine-tingling! We experience what the Prophet Joseph Smith knew when he taught, “By union of feeling we obtain power with God.”⁷ No member of the First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve would ever leave decisions for the Lord’s Church to his own best judgment!

Brothers and sisters, how can we become the men and women—the Christlike servants—the Lord needs us to be? How can we find answers to questions that perplex us? If Joseph Smith’s transcendent experience in the Sacred Grove teaches us anything, it is that the heavens are open and that God speaks to His children.

The Prophet Joseph Smith set a pattern for us to follow in resolving our questions. Drawn to the promise of James that if we lack wisdom we may ask of God,⁸ the boy Joseph took his question directly to Heavenly Father. He sought personal revelation, and his seeking opened this last dispensation.

In like manner, what will your seeking open for you? What wisdom do you lack? What do you feel an urgent need to know or understand? Follow the example of the Prophet Joseph. Find a quiet place where you can regularly go. Humble yourself before God. Pour out your heart to your Heavenly Father. Turn to Him for answers and for comfort.

Pray in the name of Jesus Christ about your concerns, your fears, your weaknesses—yes, the very longings of your heart. And then listen! Write the thoughts that come to your mind. Record your feelings and follow through with actions that you are prompted to take. As you repeat this process day after day, month after month, year after year, you will “grow into the principle of revelation.”⁹

Does God really want to speak to you? Yes! “As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course ... as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints.”¹⁰

You don’t have to wonder about what is true.¹¹ You do not have to wonder whom you can safely trust. Through personal revelation, you can receive your own witness that the Book of Mormon is the word of God, that Joseph Smith is a prophet, and that this is the Lord’s Church. Regardless of what others may say or do, no one can ever take away a witness borne to your heart and mind about what is true.

I urge you to stretch beyond your current spiritual ability to receive personal revelation, for the Lord has promised that “if thou shalt [seek], thou shalt receive revelation upon

revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal.”¹²

Oh, there is so much more that your Father in Heaven wants you to know. As Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught, “To those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, it is clear that the Father and the Son are giving away the secrets of the universe!”¹³

Nothing opens the heavens quite like the combination of increased purity, exact obedience, earnest seeking, daily feasting on the words of Christ in the Book of Mormon,¹⁴ and regular time committed to temple and family history work.

To be sure, there may be times when you feel as though the heavens are closed. But I promise that as you continue to be obedient, expressing gratitude for every blessing the Lord gives you, and as you patiently honor the Lord’s timetable, you will be given the knowledge and understanding you seek. Every blessing the Lord has for you—even miracles—will follow. That is what personal revelation will do for you.

I am optimistic about the future. It will be filled with opportunities for each of us to progress, contribute, and take the gospel to every corner of the earth. But I am also not naive about the days ahead. We live in a world that is complex and increasingly contentious. The constant availability of social media and a 24-hour news cycle bombard us with relentless messages. If we are to have any hope of sifting through the myriad of voices and the philosophies of men that attack truth, we must learn to receive revelation.

Our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, will perform some of His mightiest works between now and when He comes again. We will see miraculous indications that God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, preside over this Church in majesty and glory. But in coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost.

My beloved brothers and sisters, I plead with you to increase your spiritual capacity to receive revelation. Let this Easter Sunday be a defining moment in your life. Choose to do the spiritual work required to enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost and hear the voice of the Spirit more frequently and more clearly.

With Moroni, I exhort you on this Easter Sabbath to “come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift,”¹⁵ beginning with the gift of the Holy Ghost, which gift can and will change your life.

We are followers of Jesus Christ. The most important truth the Holy Ghost will ever witness to you is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. He lives! He is our

Advocate with the Father, our Exemplar, and our Redeemer. On this Easter Sunday, we commemorate His atoning sacrifice, His literal Resurrection, and His divinity.

This is His Church, restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. I so testify, with my expression of love for each of you, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Doctrine and Covenants 19:18.
2. See Luke 23:33.
3. See Alma 26:16.
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow* (2012), 76.
5. See Russell M. Nelson, "Sweet Power of Prayer," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2003, 7–8.
6. See 3 Nephi 28:1.
7. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 393–94.
8. See James 1:5.
9. *Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 132.
10. Doctrine and Covenants 121:33.
11. See Moroni 10:5.
12. Doctrine and Covenants 42:61.
13. Neal A. Maxwell, "Meek and Lowly" (Brigham Young University devotional, Oct. 21, 1986), 9, speeches.byu.edu.
14. See 2 Nephi 32:3.
15. Moroni 10:30.

Ministering

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2018 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

We will implement a newer, holier approach to caring for and ministering to others.

Thank you, Elder Gong and Elder Soares, for your heartfelt expressions of faith. We are so very grateful for you and your dear companions.

Dear brothers and sisters, we constantly seek direction from the Lord on how we can help our members keep the commandments of God, especially those two great commandments to love God and our neighbors.¹

For months we have been seeking a better way to minister to the spiritual and temporal needs of our people in the Savior's way.

We have made the decision to retire home teaching and visiting teaching as we have known them. Instead, we will implement a newer, holier approach to caring for and ministering to others. We will refer to these efforts simply as "ministering."

Effective ministering efforts are enabled by the innate gifts of the sisters and by the incomparable power of the priesthood. We all need such protection from the cunning wiles of the adversary.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and Sister Jean B. Bingham, General President of the Relief Society, will explain how assigned brethren of the priesthood and assigned sisters of the Relief Society and Young Women will now function in serving and watching over members of the Church throughout the world.

The First Presidency and the Twelve are united in endorsing their messages. Gratefully and prayerfully we open this new chapter in the history of the Church. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Luke 10:27.

Let Us All Press On

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2018 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

Your desire to obey will be enhanced as you remember and reflect upon what you have felt these past two days.

My beloved brothers and sisters, as we come to the close of this historic conference, I join with you in thanking the Lord for His direction and inspiring influence. The music has been beautiful and uplifting. Not only have the messages been edifying, but they have been life-changing!

In solemn assembly we sustained a new First Presidency. Two great men have been placed in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. And eight new General Authority Seventies have been called.

Now a favorite hymn summarizes our renewed resolve, our challenge, and our charge going forward:

Let us all press on in the work of the Lord,
That when life is o'er we may gain a reward;
In the fight for right let us wield a sword,
The mighty sword of truth.
Fear not, though the enemy deride;
Courage, for the Lord is on our side.
We will heed not what the wicked may say,
But the Lord alone we will obey.¹

I exhort you to study the messages of this conference frequently—even repeatedly—during the next six months. Conscientiously look for ways to incorporate these messages in your family home evenings, your gospel teaching, your conversations with family and friends, and even your discussions with those not of our faith. Many good people will respond to the truths taught in this conference when

offered in love. And your desire to obey will be enhanced as you remember and reflect upon what you have felt these past two days.

This general conference marks the beginning of a new era of ministering. The Lord has made important adjustments in the way we care for each other. Sisters and brothers—old and young—will serve one another in a new, holier way. Elders quorums will be strengthened to bless the lives of men, women, and children throughout the world. Relief Society sisters will continue to minister in their unique and loving way, extending opportunities to younger sisters to join them as appropriately assigned.

Our message to the world is simple and sincere: we invite all of God's children on both sides of the veil to come unto their Savior, receive the blessings of the holy temple, have enduring joy, and qualify for eternal life.²

Eventual exaltation requires our complete fidelity now to covenants we make and ordinances we receive in the house of the Lord. At this time, we have 159 functioning temples, and more are under construction. We want to bring temples closer to the expanding membership of the Church. So we are now pleased to announce plans to construct seven more temples. Those temples will be located in the following locations: Salta, Argentina; Bengaluru, India; Managua, Nicaragua; Cagayan de Oro, Philippines; Layton, Utah; Richmond, Virginia; and a major city yet to be determined in Russia.

My dear brothers and sisters, construction of these temples may not change your life, but your time in the temple surely will. In that spirit, I bless you to identify those things you can set aside so you can spend more time in the temple. I bless you with greater harmony and love in your homes and a deeper desire to care for your eternal family relationships. I bless you with increased faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a greater ability to follow Him as His true disciples.

I bless you to raise your voice in testimony, as I do now, that we are engaged in the work of Almighty God! Jesus is the Christ. This is His Church, which He directs through His anointed servants. I so testify, with my expression of love for each of you, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. "Let Us All Press On," *Hymns*, no. 243.

2. Defined in Doctrine and Covenants 14:7 as "the greatest of all the gifts of God."

Opening Remarks

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2018 | Saturday morning session | [Link](#)

It is time for a home-centered Church, supported by what takes place inside our branch, ward, and stake buildings.

My dear brothers and sisters, we have looked forward to gathering with you again in this October general conference of the Church. We extend our heartfelt welcome to each of you. We are deeply grateful for your sustaining prayers. We can feel their effect. Thank you!

We are grateful for your tremendous efforts to follow through with counsel given at general conference six months ago. Stake presidencies throughout the world have sought revelation necessary to reorganize elders quorums. Men of those quorums along with our dedicated Relief Society sisters are working diligently to minister to our brothers and sisters in a higher, holier way. We are inspired by your goodness and extraordinary efforts to bring the Savior's love to your families, neighbors, and friends and to minister to them as He would.

Since April conference, Sister Nelson and I have met with members on four continents and on islands of the sea. From Jerusalem to Harare, from Winnipeg to Bangkok, we have experienced your great faith and the strength of your testimonies.

We are overjoyed with the number of our youth who have joined the Lord's youth battalion to help gather scattered Israel.¹ We thank you! And as you continue to follow my invitations offered at our worldwide youth devotional, you are setting a standard for the rest of us to follow. And what a difference you youth are making!

In recent years, we in the presiding councils of the Church have wrestled with a fundamental question: how can we take the gospel in its simple purity and the ordinances with their eternal efficacy to *all* of God's children?

As Latter-day Saints, we have become accustomed to thinking of "church" as something that happens in our meetinghouses, supported by what happens at home. We need an

adjustment to this pattern. It is time for a *home-centered Church*, supported by what takes place inside our branch, ward, and stake buildings.

As the Church continues to expand throughout the world, many members live where we have no chapels—and may not for the foreseeable future. I remember a family who, because of such circumstances, was required to meet in their home. I asked the mother how she liked going to church in her own home. She replied, “I like it! My husband uses better language at home now, knowing that he will bless the sacrament here each Sunday.”

The long-standing objective of the Church is to assist all members to increase their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and in His Atonement, to assist them in making and keeping their covenants with God, and to strengthen and seal their families. In this complex world today, this is not easy. The adversary is increasing his attacks on faith and upon us and our families at an exponential rate. To survive spiritually, we need counterstrategies and proactive plans. Accordingly, we now want to put in place organizational adjustments that will further fortify our members and their families.

For many years, Church leaders have been working on an integrated curriculum to strengthen families and individuals through a *home-centered* and *Church-supported* plan to learn doctrine, strengthen faith, and foster greater personal worship. Our efforts over these recent years to hallow the Sabbath—to make it a delight and a personal sign to God of our love for Him—will be augmented by the adjustments we will now introduce.

This morning we will announce a new balance and connection between gospel instruction in the home and in the Church. We are each responsible for our individual spiritual growth. And scriptures make it clear that parents have the primary responsibility to teach the doctrine to their children.² It is the responsibility of the Church to assist each member in the divinely defined goal of increasing his or her gospel knowledge.

Elder Quentin L. Cook will now explain these important adjustments. All members of the Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are united in endorsing this message. We gratefully acknowledge the inspiration from the Lord that has influenced the development of the plans and procedures that Elder Cook will present.

My dear brothers and sisters, I know that God lives! Jesus is the Christ! This is His Church that He directs by prophecy and revelation to His humble servants. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Russell M. Nelson and Wendy W. Nelson, "Hope of Israel" (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), [HopeofIsrael.Lds.org](https://hopeofisrael.lds.org).
2. See Doctrine and Covenants 93:40; Moses 6:58–62.

Sisters' Participation in the Gathering of Israel

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2018 | General Women's session | [Link](#)

I'm extending a prophetic plea to you, the women of the Church, to shape the future by helping to gather scattered Israel.

It is wonderful to be with you, my dear and precious sisters. Perhaps a recent experience will give you a glimpse into how I feel about you and the supernal abilities with which you are endowed.

One day while I was speaking to a congregation in South America, I became exceedingly excited about my topic, and at a pivotal moment, I said, "As the *mother* of 10 children, I can tell you that ..." And then I went on to complete my message.

I did not realize that I had said the word *mother*. My translator, assuming I had misspoken, changed the word *mother* to *father*, so the congregation never knew that I had referred to myself as *mother*. But my wife Wendy heard it, and she was delighted with my Freudian slip.

In that moment, the deep longing of my heart to make a difference in the world—like only a mother does—bubbled up from my heart. Through the years, whenever I have been asked why I *chose* to become a medical doctor, my answer has always been the same: "Because I could not *choose* to be a mother."

Please note that anytime I use the word *mother*, I am not talking only about women who have given birth or adopted children in this life. I am speaking about *all* of our Heavenly Parents' adult daughters. *Every* woman is a mother by virtue of her eternal divine destiny.

So tonight, as the *father* of 10 children—*nine daughters* and one son—and as President of the Church, I pray that you will sense how deeply I feel about you—about who you are and all the good you can do. No one can do what a righteous woman can do. No one can duplicate the influence of a mother.

Men can and often do communicate the love of Heavenly Father and the Savior to others. But women have a special gift for it—a divine endowment. You have the capacity to sense what someone needs—and *when* he or she needs it. You can reach out, comfort, teach, and strengthen someone in his or her very moment of need.

Women see things differently than men do, and oh, how we need your perspective! Your nature leads you to think of others *first*, to consider the effect that any course of action will have on others.

As President Eyring pointed out, it was our glorious Mother Eve—with her far-reaching vision of our Heavenly Father’s plan—who initiated what we call “the Fall.” Her wise and courageous choice and Adam’s supporting decision moved God’s plan of happiness forward. They made it possible for each of us to come to earth, receive a body, and prove that we would choose to stand up for Jesus Christ *now*, just as we did premortally.

My dear sisters, you have special spiritual gifts and propensities. Tonight I urge you, with all the hope of my heart, to pray to understand *your spiritual gifts*—to cultivate, use, and expand them, even more than you ever have. You will change the world as you do so.

As women, you inspire others and set a standard worthy of emulation. Let me give you a little background on two of the major announcements made at our last general conference. You, my dear sisters, were key to each.

First, ministering. The supreme standard for ministering is that of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Generally, women are, and always have been, closer to that standard than men. When you are truly ministering, you follow your feelings to help someone else experience more of the Savior’s love. The inclination to minister is inherent in righteous women. I know women who pray every day, “Whom wouldst Thou have me help today?”

Before the April 2018 announcement about the higher and holier way of caring for others, the tendency of some men was to check off their home teaching assignment as “done” and move on to the next task.

But when *you* sensed that a sister you visit taught needed help, you responded immediately and then throughout the month. Thus, it was *how* you visit taught that inspired our upward shift to ministering.

Second, in the last general conference, we also restructured Melchizedek Priesthood quorums. When we wrestled with how to help the men of the Church be more effective in their responsibilities, we carefully considered the example of the Relief Society.

In Relief Society, women in various ages and stages of life meet together. Each decade of life brings unique challenges, and yet, there *you* were, week after week, mingling together, growing and teaching the gospel together, and making a real difference in the world.

Now, following your example, Melchizedek Priesthood bearers are members of the elders quorum. These men range in age from 18 to 98 (maybe more), with equally wide-ranging priesthood and Church experiences. These brethren can now create stronger fraternal linkages, learn together, and bless others more effectively.

You remember that last June, Sister Nelson and I spoke to the youth of the Church. We invited them to enlist in the Lord's youth battalion to help gather Israel on both sides of the veil. This gathering is "*the greatest challenge, the greatest cause, and the greatest work on earth today*"!¹

It is a cause that desperately needs women, because women shape the future. So tonight I'm extending a prophetic plea to you, the women of the Church, to shape the future by helping to gather scattered Israel.

Where can you start?

May I offer *four invitations*:

First, I invite you to participate in a 10-day fast from social media and from any other media that bring negative and impure thoughts to your mind. Pray to know which influences to remove during your fast. The effect of your 10-day fast may surprise you. What do you notice after taking a break from perspectives of the world that have been wounding your spirit? Is there a change in where you *now* want to spend your time and energy? Have any of your priorities shifted—even just a little? I urge you to record and follow through with each impression.

Second, I invite you to read the Book of Mormon between now and the end of the year. As impossible as that may seem with all you are trying to manage in your life, if you will accept this invitation with full purpose of heart, the Lord will help you find a way to achieve it. And, as you prayerfully study, I promise that the heavens will open for you. The Lord will bless you with increased inspiration and revelation.

As you read, I would encourage you to mark each verse that speaks of or refers to the Savior. Then, be intentional about talking of Christ, rejoicing in Christ, and preaching of Christ with your families and friends.² You and they will be drawn closer to the Savior through this process. And changes, even miracles, will begin to happen.

This morning the announcement was made regarding the new Sunday schedule and home-centered, Church-supported curriculum. You, my dear sisters, are a key to the success of this new, balanced, and coordinated gospel-teaching effort. Please teach those whom you love what you are learning from the scriptures. Teach them how to turn to the Savior for His healing and cleansing power when they sin. And teach them how to draw upon His strengthening power every day of their lives.

Third, establish a pattern of regular temple attendance. This may require a little more sacrifice in your life. More regular time in the temple will allow the Lord to teach you how to draw upon His priesthood power with which you have been endowed in His temple. For those of you who don't live near a temple, I invite you to study prayerfully about temples in the scriptures and in the words of living prophets. Seek to *know* more, to *understand* more, to *feel* more about temples than you ever have before.

In our worldwide youth devotional last June, I spoke about a young man whose life changed when his parents exchanged his smartphone for a flip phone. This young man's mother is a fearless woman of faith. She saw her son drifting toward choices that could prevent him from serving a mission. She took her pleadings to the temple to know how best to help her son. Then she followed through with every impression.

She said: "I felt the Spirit guiding me to check my son's phone at specific times to catch specific things. I don't know how to navigate these smartphones, but the Spirit guided me through all the social media that I don't even use! I know the Spirit helps parents who are seeking guidance to protect their children. [At first] my son was furious with me. ... But after only three days, he thanked me! He could feel the difference."

Her son's behavior and attitudes changed dramatically. He became more helpful at home, smiled more, and was more attentive at church. He loved serving for a time in a temple baptistry and preparing for his mission.

My fourth invitation, for you who are of age, is to participate fully in Relief Society. I urge you to study the current Relief Society purpose statement. It is inspiring. It may guide you in developing your own purpose statement for your own life. I also entreat you to savor the truths in the Relief Society declaration published almost 20 years ago.³ A framed copy of this declaration hangs on the wall in the office of the First Presidency. I am thrilled *every* time I read it. It describes who you are and who the Lord needs you to be at this *precise* time as you do *your* part to help gather scattered Israel.

My dear sisters, we need *you!* We “need *your* strength, *your* conversion, *your* conviction, *your* ability to lead, *your* wisdom, and *your* voices.”⁴ We simply cannot gather Israel without you.

I love you and thank you and now bless you with the ability to leave the world behind as you assist in this crucial and urgent work. Together we can do all that our Heavenly Father needs us to do to prepare the world for the Second Coming of His Beloved Son.

Jesus is the Christ. This is His Church. Of this I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Hope of Israel” (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), HopeofIsrael.lds.org.

2. See 2 Nephi 25:26.

3. These documents are available online. For the Relief Society purpose statement, see lds.org/callings/relief-society. For the Relief Society declaration, see Mary Ellen Smoot, “Rejoice, Daughters of Zion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 92–94; *Liahona*, Jan. 2000, 111–14.

4. Russell M. Nelson, “A Plea to My Sisters,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 96; emphasis added.

The Correct Name of the Church

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

Oct 2018 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

Jesus Christ directed us to call the Church by His name because it is His Church, filled with His power.

My beloved brothers and sisters, on this beautiful Sabbath day we rejoice together in our many blessings from the Lord. We are very grateful for your testimonies of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, for the sacrifices you've made to stay on or return to His covenant path, and for your consecrated service in His Church.

Today I feel compelled to discuss with you a matter of great importance. Some weeks ago, I released a statement regarding a course correction for the name of the Church.¹ I did this because the Lord impressed upon my mind the importance of the name He decreed for His Church, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.²

As you would expect, responses to this statement and to the revised style guide³ have been mixed. Many members immediately corrected the name of the Church on their blogs and social media pages. Others wondered why, with all that's going on in the world, it was necessary to emphasize something so "inconsequential." And some said it couldn't be done, so why even try? Let me explain why we care so deeply about this issue. But first let me state what this effort is *not*:

It is *not* a name change.

It is *not* rebranding.

It is *not* cosmetic.

It is *not* a whim.

And it is *not* inconsequential.

Instead, it *is* a correction. It *is* the command of the Lord. Joseph Smith did not name the Church restored through him; neither did Mormon. It was the Savior Himself who said, "For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."⁴

Even earlier, in AD 34, our resurrected Lord gave similar instruction to members of His Church when He visited them in the Americas. At that time He said:

“Ye shall call the church in my name. ...

“And how be it my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses’ name then it be Moses’ church; or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church.”⁵

Thus, the name of the Church is not negotiable. When the Savior clearly states what the name of His Church should be and even precedes His declaration with, “Thus shall my church be called,” He is serious. And if we allow nicknames to be used or adopt or even sponsor those nicknames ourselves, He is offended.

What’s in a name or, in this case, a nickname? When it comes to nicknames of the Church, such as the “LDS Church,” the “Mormon Church,” or the “Church of the Latter-day Saints,” the most important thing *in* those names is the *absence* of the Savior’s name. To remove the Lord’s name from the Lord’s Church is a major victory for Satan. When we *discard* the Savior’s name, we are subtly *disregarding* all that Jesus Christ did for us—even His Atonement.

Consider this from His perspective: Premortally, He was Jehovah, God of the Old Testament. Under the direction of His Father, He was the Creator of this and other worlds.⁶ He chose to submit to the will of His Father and do something for all of God’s children that no one else could do! Condescending to come to earth as the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh, He was brutally reviled, mocked, spit upon, and scourged. In the Garden of Gethsemane, our Savior took upon Himself *every* pain, *every* sin, and *all* of the anguish and suffering *ever* experienced by you and me and by everyone who has ever lived or will ever live. Under the weight of that excruciating burden, He bled from every pore.⁷ All of this suffering was intensified as He was cruelly crucified on Calvary’s cross.

Through these excruciating experiences and His subsequent Resurrection—His infinite Atonement—He granted immortality to all and ransomed each one of us from the effects of sin on condition of our repentance.

Following the Savior’s Resurrection and the death of His Apostles, the world plunged into centuries of darkness. Then in the year 1820, God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith to initiate the Restoration of the Lord’s Church.

After all He had endured—and after all He had done for humankind—I realize with profound regret that we have unwittingly acquiesced in the Lord’s restored Church being called by other names, each of which expunges the sacred name of Jesus Christ!

Every Sunday as we worthily partake of the sacrament, we make anew our sacred promise to our Heavenly Father that we are willing to take upon us the name of His Son, Jesus Christ.⁸ We promise to follow Him, repent, keep His commandments, and *always* remember Him.

When we omit His name from His Church, we are inadvertently removing *Him* as the central focus of our lives.

Taking the Savior’s name upon us includes declaring and witnessing to others—through our actions and our words—that Jesus is the Christ. Have we been so afraid to *offend* someone who called us “Mormons” that we have failed to *defend* the Savior Himself, to stand up for Him even in the name by which His Church is called?

If we as a people and as individuals are to have access to the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ—to cleanse and heal us, to strengthen and magnify us, and ultimately to exalt us—we must clearly acknowledge Him as the source of that power. We can begin by calling His Church by the name He decreed.

For much of the world, the Lord’s Church is presently disguised as the “Mormon Church.” But we as members of the Lord’s Church know who stands at its head: Jesus Christ Himself. Unfortunately, many who hear the term *Mormon* may think that we worship Mormon. Not so! We honor and respect that great ancient American prophet.⁹ But we are *not* Mormon’s disciples. We are the Lord’s disciples.

In the early days of the restored Church, terms such as *Mormon Church* and *Mormons*¹⁰ were often used as epithets—as cruel terms, abusive terms—designed to obliterate God’s hand in restoring the Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days.¹¹

Brothers and sisters, there are many worldly arguments against restoring the correct name of the Church. Because of the digital world in which we live and with search engine optimization that helps all of us find information we need almost instantly—including information about the Lord’s Church—critics say that a correction at this point is unwise. Others feel that because we are known so widely as “Mormons” and as the “Mormon Church,” we should make the best of it.

If this were a discussion about branding a man-made organization, those arguments might prevail. But in this crucial matter, we look to Him whose Church this is and acknowledge that the Lord’s ways are not, and never will be, man’s ways. If we will be

patient and if we will do our part well, the Lord will lead us through this important task. After all, we know that the Lord helps those who seek to do His will, just as He helped Nephi accomplish the task of building a ship to cross the sea.¹²

We will want to be courteous and patient in our efforts to correct these errors.

Responsible media will be sympathetic in responding to our request.

In a previous general conference, Elder Benjamín De Hoyos spoke of such an event. He said:

“Some years ago while serving in the office of public affairs of the Church in Mexico, [a companion and I] were invited to participate in a radio talk show. ... [One of the program directors] asked [us], ‘Why does the Church have such a long name? ...’

“My companion and I smiled at such a magnificent question and then proceeded to explain that the name of the Church was not chosen by man. It was given by the Savior. ... The program director immediately and respectfully responded, ‘We will thus repeat it with great pleasure.’”¹³

That report provides a pattern. One by one, our best efforts as individuals will be required to correct errors that have crept in through the years.¹⁴ The rest of the world may or may not follow our lead in calling us by the correct name. But it is disingenuous for us to be frustrated if most of the world calls the Church and its members by the wrong names if we do the same.

Our revised style guide is helpful. It states: “In the first reference, the full name of the Church is preferred: ‘The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.’ When a shortened [second] reference is needed, the terms ‘the Church’ or the ‘Church of Jesus Christ’ are encouraged. The ‘restored Church of Jesus Christ’ is also accurate and encouraged.”¹⁵

If someone should ask, “Are you a Mormon?” you could reply, “If you are asking if I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, yes, I am!”

If someone asks, “Are you a Latter-day Saint?”¹⁶ you might respond, “Yes, I am. I believe in Jesus Christ and am a member of His restored Church.”

My dear brothers and sisters, I promise you that if we will do our best to restore the correct name of the Lord’s Church, He whose Church this is will pour down His power and blessings upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints,¹⁷ the likes of which we have never seen. We will have the knowledge and power of God to help us take the blessings of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people and to prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord.

So, what's in a name? When it comes to the name of the Lord's Church, the answer is "Everything!" Jesus Christ directed us to call the Church by His name because it is His Church, filled with His power.

I know that God lives. Jesus is the Christ. He leads His Church today. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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1. "The Lord has impressed upon my mind the importance of the name He has revealed for His Church, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We have work before us to bring ourselves in harmony with His will. In recent weeks, various Church leaders and departments have initiated the necessary steps to do so. Additional information about this important matter will be made available in the coming months" (Russell M. Nelson, in "The Name of the Church" [official statement, Aug. 16, 2018], mormonnewsroom.org).
 2. Preceding Presidents of the Church have made similar requests. For example, President George Albert Smith said: "Don't let the Lord down by calling this the Mormon Church. He didn't call it the Mormon Church" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1948, 160).
 3. See "Style Guide—The Name of the Church," mormonnewsroom.org.
 4. Doctrine and Covenants 115:4.
 5. 3 Nephi 27:7–8.
 6. See Moses 1:33.
 7. See Doctrine and Covenants 19:18.
 8. See Moroni 4:3; Doctrine and Covenants 20:37, 77.
 9. Mormon was one of the four major writers of the Book of Mormon, the others being Nephi, Jacob, and Moroni. All were eyewitnesses of the Lord, as was its inspired translator, the Prophet Joseph Smith.
 10. Even the word *Mormonites* was among terms of derision that were employed (see *History of the Church*, 2:62–63, 126).
 11. Other epithets seem to have occurred in New Testament times. During the Apostle Paul's trial before Felix, Paul was said to be "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5). Regarding the use of the phrase "of the Nazarenes," one commentator wrote: "This was the name usually given to Christians by way of contempt. They were so called because Jesus was of Nazareth" (Albert Barnes, *Notes, Explanatory and Practical, on the Acts of the Apostles* [1937], 313). Similarly, another commentary states: "As our Lord was contemptuously called 'The Nazarene' (Matt. xxvi. 71), so the Jews designated his disciples 'Nazarenes.' They would not admit that they were Christians, *i.e.* disciples of the Messiah" (*The Pulpit Commentary: The Acts of the Apostles*, ed. H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell [1884], 2:231).
- In a related vein, Elder Neal A. Maxwell observed: "Throughout scriptural history, we see recurring efforts to demean prophets in order to dismiss them—to label them in order to diminish them. Mostly, however, they are simply ignored by their contemporaries and by secular history. After all,

early Christians were merely called 'the sect of the Nazarenes.' (Acts 24:5.)" ("Out of Obscurity," *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 10).

12. See 1 Nephi 18:1–2.

13. Benjamín De Hoyos, "Called to Be Saints," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 106.

14. While we have no control over what other people may call us, we are in complete control over how we refer to ourselves. How can we expect others to honor the correct name of the Church if we as its members fail to do so?

15. "Style Guide—The Name of the Church," mormonnewsroom.org.

16. The term *saint* is used often in the Holy Bible. In Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, for example, he used the word *saint* at least once in every chapter. A saint is a person who believes in Jesus Christ and strives to follow Him.

17. See Doctrine and Covenants 121:33.

Becoming Exemplary Latter-day Saints

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2018 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

I leave my love and blessing upon you, that you may feast upon the word of the Lord and apply His teachings in your personal lives.

This has been an inspirational and historic conference. We look to the future with enthusiasm. We have been motivated to do better and to be better. The marvelous messages delivered from this pulpit by our General Authorities and General Officers and the music have been sublime! I urge you to study these messages, commencing this week.¹ They express the mind and the will of the Lord for His people, today.

The new home-centered, Church-supported integrated curriculum has the potential to unleash the power of families, as each family follows through conscientiously and carefully to transform their home into a sanctuary of faith. I promise that as you diligently work to remodel your home into a center of gospel learning, over time your Sabbath days will truly be a delight. Your children will be excited to learn and to live the Savior's teachings, and the influence of the adversary in your life and in your home will decrease. Changes in your family will be dramatic and sustaining.

During this conference we have strengthened our resolve to execute the essential effort to honor the Lord Jesus Christ every time we refer to His Church. I promise you that our rigorous attention to use the correct name of the Savior's Church and its members will lead to increased faith and access to greater spiritual power for members of His Church.

Now let's turn to the topic of temples. We know that our time in the temple is crucial to our salvation and exaltation and to that of our families.

After we receive our own temple ordinances and make sacred covenants with God, each one of us needs the ongoing spiritual strengthening and tutoring that is possible only in the house of the Lord. And our ancestors need us to serve as proxy for them.

Consider the great mercy and fairness of God, who, before the foundation of the world, provided a way to give temple blessings to those who died without a knowledge of the gospel. These sacred temple rites are ancient. To me that antiquity is thrilling and another evidence of their authenticity.²

My dear brothers and sisters, the assaults of the adversary are increasing exponentially, in intensity and in variety.³ Our need to be in the temple on a regular basis has never been greater. I plead with you to take a prayerful look at how you spend your time. Invest time in your future and in that of your family. If you have reasonable access to a temple, I urge you to find a way to make an appointment regularly with the Lord—to be in His holy house—then keep that appointment with exactness and joy. I promise you that the Lord will bring the miracles He knows you need as you make sacrifices to serve and worship in His temples.

Currently we have 159 dedicated temples. The proper care and maintenance of those temples is very important to us. With the passage of time, temples are inevitably in need of refreshing and renewal. To that end, plans are now being made to renovate and update the Salt Lake Temple and other pioneer-generation temples. Details on these projects will be shared as they are developed.

Today we are pleased to announce plans to construct 12 more temples. Those temples will be built in the following locations: Mendoza, Argentina; Salvador, Brazil; Yuba City, California; Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Praia, Cape Verde; Yigo, Guam; Puebla, Mexico; Auckland, New Zealand; Lagos, Nigeria; Davao, Philippines; San Juan, Puerto Rico; and Washington County, Utah.

Building and maintaining temples may not change your life, but spending your time in the temple surely will. To those who have long been absent from the temple, I encourage you to prepare and return as soon as possible. Then I invite you to worship in the temple and pray to feel deeply the Savior's infinite love for you, that each of you may gain your own testimony that He directs this sacred and ageless work.⁴

Brothers and sisters, I thank you for your faith and sustaining efforts. I leave my love and blessing upon you, that you may feast upon the word of the Lord and apply His teachings in your personal lives. I assure you that revelation continues in the Church and will continue until "the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done."⁵

I bless you with increased faith in Him and in His holy work, with faith and patience to endure your personal challenges in life. I bless you to become exemplary Latter-day

Saints. I so bless you and bear my testimony that God lives! Jesus is the Christ! This is His Church. We are His people, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See general conference messages online at LDS.org and on the Gospel Library app. They will be printed in the *Ensign* and *Liahona*. The Church magazines, including the *New Era* and the *Friend*, delivered through the mail or downloaded online, are an important part of your home-centered gospel curriculum.

2. See, for example, Exodus 28; 29; Leviticus 8.

3. See Mosiah 4:29.

4. See Wilford Woodruff, "The Law of Adoption," discourse delivered at the general conference of the Church, Apr. 8, 1894. President Woodruff said: "We have not got through [with] revelation. We have not got through [with] the work of God. ... There will be no end to this work until it is perfected" (*Deseret Evening News*, Apr. 14, 1894, 9).

5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 142.

We Can Do Better and Be Better

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2019 | General Priesthood session | [Link](#)

Make your focus on daily repentance so integral to your life that you can exercise the priesthood with greater power than ever before.

My dear brethren, it is inspiring to look out over this vast congregation of the Lord's battalion of priesthood bearers. What a mighty force for good you are! We love you. We pray for you. And we are most grateful for you.

Recently I have found myself drawn to the Lord's instruction given through the Prophet Joseph Smith: "Say nothing but repentance unto this generation."¹ This declaration is often repeated throughout scripture.² It prompts an obvious question: "Does everyone need to repent?" The answer is yes.

Too many people consider repentance as punishment—something to be avoided except in the most serious circumstances. But this feeling of being penalized is engendered by Satan. He tries to block us from looking to Jesus Christ,³ who stands with open arms,⁴ hoping and willing to heal, forgive, cleanse, strengthen, purify, and sanctify us.

The word for repentance in the Greek New Testament is metanoeo. The prefix meta- means "change." The suffix -noeo is related to Greek words that mean "mind," "knowledge," "spirit," and "breath."⁵

Thus, when Jesus asks you and me to "repent,"⁶ He is inviting us to change our mind, our knowledge, our spirit—even the way we breathe. He is asking us to change the way we love, think, serve, spend our time, treat our wives, teach our children, and even care for our bodies.

Nothing is more liberating, more ennobling, or more crucial to our individual progression than is a regular, daily focus on repentance. Repentance is not an event; it is a process. It is the key to happiness and peace of mind. When coupled with faith, repentance opens our access to the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.⁷

Whether you are diligently moving along the covenant path, have slipped or stepped from the covenant path, or can't even see the path from where you are now, I plead with you to repent. Experience the strengthening power of daily repentance—of doing and being a little better each day.

When we choose to repent, we choose to change! We allow the Savior to transform us into the best version of ourselves. We choose to grow spiritually and receive joy—the joy of redemption in Him.⁸ When we choose to repent, we choose to become more like Jesus Christ!⁹

Brethren, we need to do better and be better because we are in a battle. The battle with sin is real. The adversary is quadrupling his efforts to disrupt testimonies and impede the work of the Lord. He is arming his minions with potent weapons to keep us from partaking of the joy and love of the Lord.¹⁰

Repentance is the key to avoiding misery inflicted by traps of the adversary. The Lord does not expect perfection from us at this point in our eternal progression. But He does expect us to become increasingly pure. Daily repentance is the pathway to purity, and purity brings power. Personal purity can make us powerful tools in the hands of God. Our repentance—our purity—will empower us to help in the gathering of Israel.

The Lord taught the Prophet Joseph Smith “that the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.”¹¹

We know what will give us greater access to the powers of heaven. We also know what will hinder our progress—what we need to stop doing to increase our access to the powers of heaven. Brethren, prayerfully seek to understand what stands in the way of your repentance. Identify what stops you from repenting. And then, change! Repent! All of us can do better and be better than ever before.¹²

There are specific ways in which we can likely improve. One is in the way we treat our bodies. I stand in awe of the miracle of the human body. It is a magnificent creation, essential to our gradual ascent toward our ultimate divine potential. We cannot progress without it. In giving us the gift of a body, God has allowed us to take a vital step toward becoming more like Him.

Satan understands this. He chafes at the fact that his premortal apostasy permanently disqualifies him from this privilege, leaving him in a constant state of jealousy and resentment. Thus many, if not most, of the temptations he puts in our path cause us to

abuse our bodies or the bodies of others. Because Satan is miserable without a body, he wants us to be miserable because of ours.¹³

Your body is your personal temple, created to house your eternal spirit.¹⁴ Your care of that temple is important. Now, I ask you, brethren, are you more interested in dressing and grooming your body to appeal to the world than to please God? Your answer to this question sends a direct message to Him about your feelings regarding His transcendent gift to you. In this reverence for our bodies, brethren, I think we can do better and be better.

Another way we can also do better and be better is how we honor the women in our lives, beginning with our wives and daughters, our mothers and sisters.¹⁵

Months ago, I received a heartbreaking letter from a dear sister. She wrote: “[My daughters and I] feel we are in fierce competition for our husbands’ and sons’ undivided attention, with 24/7 sports updates, video games, stock market updates, [and] endless analyzing and watching of games of every [conceivable] sport. It feels like we’re losing our front-row seats with our husbands and sons because of their permanent front-row seats with [sports and games].”¹⁶

Brethren, your first and foremost duty as a bearer of the priesthood is to love and care for your wife. Become one with her. Be her partner. Make it easy for her to want to be yours. No other interest in life should take priority over building an eternal relationship with her. Nothing on TV, a mobile device, or a computer is more important than her well-being. Take an inventory of how you spend your time and where you devote your energy. That will tell you where your heart is. Pray to have your heart attuned to your wife’s heart. Seek to bring her joy. Seek her counsel, and listen. Her input will improve your output.

If you have a need to repent because of the way you have treated the women closest to you, begin now. And remember that it is your responsibility to help the women in your life receive the blessings that derive from living the Lord’s law of chastity. Never be the reason that a woman is unable to receive her temple blessings.

Brethren, we all need to repent. We need to get up off the couch, put down the remote, and wake up from our spiritual slumber. It is time to put on the full armor of God so we can engage in the most important work on earth. It is time to “thrust in [our] sickles, and reap with all [our] might, mind, and strength.”¹⁷ The forces of evil have never raged more forcefully than they do today. As servants of the Lord, we cannot be asleep while this battle rages.

Your family needs your leadership and love. Your quorum and those in your ward or branch need your strength. And all who meet you need to know what a true disciple of the Lord looks like and acts like.

My dear brethren, you were chosen by our Father to come to earth at this crucial time because of your premortal spiritual valor. You are among the finest, most valiant men who have ever come to the earth. Satan knows who you are and who you were premortally, and he understands the work that must be done before the Savior returns. And after millennia of practicing his cunning arts, the adversary is experienced and incorrigible.

Gratefully, the priesthood we hold is far stronger than are the wiles of the adversary. I plead with you to be the men and young men the Lord needs you to be. Make your focus on daily repentance so integral to your life that you can exercise the priesthood with greater power than ever before. This is the only way you will keep yourself and your family spiritually safe in the challenging days ahead.

The Lord needs selfless men who put the welfare of others ahead of their own. He needs men who intentionally work to hear the voice of the Spirit with clarity. He needs men of the covenant who keep their covenants with integrity. He needs men who are determined to keep themselves sexually pure—worthy men who can be called upon at a moment's notice to give blessings with pure hearts, clean minds, and willing hands. The Lord needs men eager to repent—men with a zeal to serve and be part of the Lord's battalion of worthy priesthood bearers.

I bless you to become those men. I bless you with the courage to repent daily and learn how to exercise full priesthood power. I bless you to communicate the love of the Savior to your wife and children and to all who know you. I bless you to do better and be better. And I bless you that as you make these efforts, you will experience miracles in your life.

We are engaged in the work of Almighty God. Jesus is the Christ. We are Their servants. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Doctrine and Covenants 6:9; 11:9.

2. See Mark 1:4; Mosiah 18:20; Alma 37:33; 3 Nephi 7:23; Moroni 3:3; Doctrine and Covenants 19:21; 44:3; 55:2.

3. See Doctrine and Covenants 6:36.

4. See Deuteronomy 26:8; 2 Nephi 1:15; Mormon 6:17; Doctrine and Covenants 6:20.

5. See Russell M. Nelson, "Repentance and Conversion," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2007, 103.

6. See, for example, Luke 13:3, 5.
7. See 2 Nephi 9:23; Mosiah 4:6; 3 Nephi 9:22; 27:19.
8. See Russell M. Nelson, "Repentance and Conversion," 103–4.
9. See 3 Nephi 27:27.
10. See Jude 1:17–21; 2 Nephi 2:25, 27; 28:20; see also 1 Nephi 8:10–12, 21–23; 11:21–22; 12:17; Doctrine and Covenants 10:22; Moses 5:13.
11. Doctrine and Covenants 121:36.
12. The words the Lord has inspired in the revelations and in present-day teachings—*higher, holier, accelerate, increase, strengthen, greater, transform, remodel, improve, enhance, change, deepen, stretch*—are words of spiritual growth (see Russell M. Nelson, "Becoming Exemplary Latter-day Saints," Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2018, 113–14).
13. We know that "men are free according to the flesh. ... They are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself" (2 Nephi 2:27).
14. See 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 6:18–20.
15. See Jacob 2:35.
16. Letter received Feb. 4, 2019.
17. Doctrine and Covenants 33:7.

"Come, Follow Me"

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2019 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

Jesus Christ invites us to take the covenant path back home to our Heavenly Parents and be with those we love.

My beloved brothers and sisters, my wife Wendy and I rejoice in being with you on this Sabbath morning. Much has happened since our last general conference. New temples have been dedicated in Concepción, Chile; Barranquilla, Colombia; and Rome, Italy. We experienced a rich outpouring of the Spirit at these sacred events.

I congratulate the many women (and men) who have recently read the Book of Mormon and discovered joy and hidden treasures. I am inspired by reports about miracles received.

I marvel at 11-year-old young men who, now as deacons, worthily pass the sacrament each Sunday. They go to the temple along with our 11-year-old young women, who are now eagerly learning and serving as Beehives. Both young men and young women are preaching gospel truths with clarity and conviction.

I rejoice with children and youth who are helping to teach the gospel in their homes as they work with their parents to follow the home-centered, Church-supported curriculum.

We received this photo of four-year-old Blake, who, early on a Saturday morning, grabbed a Church book and exclaimed, "I need to feed my spirit!"

Blake, we are thrilled with you and others who are choosing to feed their spirits by feasting on the truths of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. And we delight in knowing that many are receiving the power of God in their lives as they worship and serve in the temple.

As many of you know, our family experienced a tender separation three months ago when our daughter Wendy departed from this mortal life. In the final days of her battle

with cancer, I was blessed with the opportunity to have our farewell daddy-daughter conversation.

I held her hands and told her how much I loved her and how grateful I was to be her father. I said: "You married in the temple and faithfully honored your covenants. You and your husband welcomed seven children into your home and raised them to be devout disciples of Jesus Christ, valiant Church members, and contributing citizens. And they have chosen spouses of that same caliber. Your daddy is very, very proud of you. You have brought me much joy!"

She quietly responded, "Thank you, Daddy."

It was a tender, tearful moment for us. During her 67 years, we worked together, sang together, and often skied together. But that evening, we talked of things that matter most, such as covenants, ordinances, obedience, faith, family, fidelity, love, and eternal life.

We miss our daughter greatly. However, because of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, we do not worry about her. As we continue to honor our covenants with God, we live in anticipation of our being with her again. Meanwhile, we're serving the Lord here and she is serving Him there—in paradise.¹

Actually, my wife and I visited Paradise earlier this year—Paradise, California, that is. As it happened, our scheduled visit there came less than 40 hours after our daughter departed from this world. We, along with Elder Kevin W. Pearson and his wife, June, were bolstered by the Saints of the Chico California Stake. We learned of their great faith, their ministering, and the miracles that occurred even amidst their devastating losses from the most destructive wildfire in the history of California.

While there, we spoke at length with a young police officer, John, who was one of many brave first responders. He recalled the thick darkness that descended upon Paradise on November 8, 2018, as flames and embers raced through the town, devouring property and possessions like a scourge and leaving nothing but piles of ash and stark brick chimneys.

For 15 hours, John drove through an impenetrable darkness that was streaked with javelins of threatening embers as he helped person after person, family after family escape to safety—all at the peril of his own life. Yet during that strenuous ordeal, what terrified John most was his all-consuming question: "*Where is my family?*" After many long, terrifying hours of anguish, he finally learned of their safe evacuation.

The account of John's concern for his family has prompted me to speak today with those of you who may ask when approaching the end of your mortal life, "*Where is my family?*" In that coming day when you will complete your mortal probation and enter the spirit world, you will be brought face-to-face with that heart-wrenching question: "*Where is my family?*"

Jesus Christ teaches the way back to our eternal home. He understands our Heavenly Father's plan of eternal progression better than any of us. After all, He is the keystone of it all. He is our Redeemer, our Healer, and our Savior.

Ever since Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden, Jesus the Christ has offered His mighty arm to help all who choose to follow Him. Repeatedly, scriptures record that despite all kinds of sins from all kinds of people, His arms are outstretched still.²

The spirit in each of us naturally yearns for family love to last forever. Love songs perpetuate a false hope that love is all you need if you want to be together forever. And some erroneously believe that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ provides a promise that all people will be with their loved ones after death.

In truth, the Savior Himself has made it abundantly clear that while His Resurrection assures that every person who ever lived will indeed be resurrected and live forever,³ much more is required if we want to have the high privilege of exaltation. Salvation is an individual matter, but exaltation is a family matter.

Listen to these words spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ to His prophet: "All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise ... are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead."⁴

So, what is required for a family to be exalted forever? We qualify for *that* privilege by making covenants with God, keeping those covenants, and receiving essential ordinances.

This has been true since the beginning of time. Adam and Eve, Noah and his wife, Abraham and Sarah, Lehi and Sariah, and all other devoted disciples of Jesus Christ—since the world was created—have made the *same* covenants with God. They

have received the *same* ordinances that we as members of the Lord's restored Church today have made: those covenants that we receive at baptism and in the temple.

The Savior invites all to follow Him into the waters of baptism and, in time, to make additional covenants with God in the temple and receive and be faithful to those further essential ordinances. All these are required if we want to be exalted with our families and with God forever.

The anguish of my heart is that many people whom I love, whom I admire, and whom I respect decline His invitation. They ignore the pleadings of Jesus Christ when He beckons, "Come, follow me."⁵

I understand why God weeps.⁶ I also weep for such friends and relatives. They are wonderful men and women, devoted to their family and civic responsibilities. They give generously of their time, energy, and resources. And the world is better for their efforts. But they have chosen *not* to make covenants with God. They have not received the ordinances that will exalt them with their families and bind them together forever.⁷

How I wish I could visit with them and invite them to consider seriously the enabling laws of the Lord. I've wondered what I could possibly say so they would feel how much the Savior loves them and know how much I love them and come to recognize how covenant-keeping women and men can receive a "fulness of joy."⁸

They need to understand that while there *is* a place for them hereafter—with wonderful men and women who also chose *not* to make covenants with God—that is *not* the place where families will be reunited and be given the privilege to live and progress forever. That is *not* the kingdom where they will experience the fulness of joy—of never-ending progression and happiness.⁹ Those consummate blessings can come only by living in an exalted celestial realm with God, our Eternal Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and our wonderful, worthy, and qualified family members.

I feel to say to my reticent friends:

"In this life, you have never settled for second best in anything. Yet, as you resist fully embracing the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, you are choosing to settle for second best.

"The Savior said, 'In my Father's house are many mansions.'¹⁰ However, as you choose *not* to make covenants with God, you are settling for a most meager roof over your head throughout all eternity."

I would further entreat my reticent friends by saying:

“Pour out your heart to God. Ask Him if these things are true. Make time to study His words. Really study! If you truly love your family and if you desire to be exalted with them throughout eternity, pay the price now—through serious study and fervent prayer—to know these eternal truths and then to abide by them.

“If you are not sure you even believe in God, start there. Understand that in the absence of experiences with God, one can doubt the existence of God. So, put yourself in a position to begin having experiences with Him. Humble yourself. Pray to have eyes to see God’s hand in your life and in the world around you. Ask Him to tell you if He is really there—if He knows you. Ask Him how He feels about you. And then listen.”

One such dear friend of mine had limited experiences with God. But he longed to be with his departed wife. So he asked me to help him. I encouraged him to meet with our missionaries in order to understand the doctrine of Christ and learn of gospel covenants, ordinances, and blessings.

That he did. But he felt the course they advised would require him to make too many changes in his life. He said, “Those commandments and covenants are just too difficult for me. Also, I can’t possibly pay tithing, and I don’t have time to serve in the Church.” Then he asked me, “Once I die, please do the necessary temple work for my wife and me so that we can be together again.”

Thankfully, I am not this man’s judge. But I do question the efficacy of proxy temple work for a man who had the opportunity to be baptized in this life—to be ordained to the priesthood and receive temple blessings while here in mortality—but who made the conscious decision to reject that course.

My dear brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ invites us to take the covenant path back home to our Heavenly Parents and be with those we love. He invites us to “come, follow me.”

Now, as President of His Church, I plead with you who have distanced yourselves from the Church and with you who have not yet really sought to know that the Savior’s Church has been restored. Do the spiritual work to find out for yourselves, and please do it now. Time is running out.

I testify that God lives! Jesus is the Christ. His Church and the fulness of His gospel have been restored to bless our lives with joy, here and hereafter. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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1. See Alma 40:12–14.
 2. See Jeremiah 27:5; Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34; Alma 5:33; 3 Nephi 9:14.
 3. The Resurrection will come to all because of Christ's victory over death (see Alma 11:41–45; 40; Doctrine and Covenants 76; Moses 7:62).
 4. Doctrine and Covenants 132:7.
 5. Luke 18:22.
 6. See John 11:35; Moses 7:28–29.
 7. See Doctrine and Covenants 76:50–70.
 8. Doctrine and Covenants 138:17.
 9. See Mosiah 2:41; Alma 28:12.
 10. John 14:2.

Closing Remarks

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2019 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

May we dedicate and rededicate our lives to serving God and His children—on both sides of the veil.

My beloved brothers and sisters, as we come to the end of this historic conference, we thank the Lord for His inspiration and protection. The messages have instructed and edified us.

Topics were not assigned to the speakers. They each prayed for personal revelation in preparing their messages. To me, it is remarkable how those themes seem to fit so well with each other. As you study them, seek to learn what the Lord is trying to teach *you* through His servants.

The music has been glorious. We are deeply grateful to the many musicians who have blended their talents to bring the Spirit of the Lord into each session. And He has blessed the prayers and the congregations in every session. Truly, conference has again been a spiritual feast for us all.

We hope and pray that each member's home will become a true sanctuary of faith, where the Spirit of the Lord may dwell. Despite contention all around us, one's home can become a heavenly place, where study, prayer, and faith can be merged with love. We can truly become disciples of the Lord, standing up and speaking up for Him wherever we are.

God's objective should be our objective. He wants His children to *choose* to return to Him, prepared, qualified, endowed, sealed, and faithful to covenants made in holy temples.

We now have 162 dedicated temples. The earliest ones stand as monuments to the faith and vision of our beloved pioneers. Each temple constructed by them resulted from their great personal sacrifice and effort. Each one stands as a stunning jewel in the crown of pioneer achievement.

Ours is a sacred responsibility to care for them. Therefore, these pioneer temples will soon undergo a period of renewal and refreshing and, for some, a major restoration. Efforts will be made to preserve the unique historicity of each temple wherever possible, preserving the inspiring beauty and unique craftsmanship of generations long-since passed.

Details for the St. George Utah Temple have already been released. Plans for the renovation of the Salt Lake Temple, Temple Square, and the adjoining plaza near the Church Office Building will be announced on Friday, April 19, 2019.

The Manti and Logan Utah Temples will also be renovated in coming years. When those plans are prepared, they too will be announced.

This work will require that each temple be closed for a period of time. Church members may continue to enjoy temple worship and service in other temples nearby. When each project is completed, each historic temple will be rededicated.

Brothers and sisters, we regard a temple as the most sacred structure in the Church. As we announce plans to construct a *new* temple, it becomes part of our sacred history. Now, please listen carefully and reverently. If I announce a temple in a place that is special to you, may I suggest that you simply bow your head with a silent prayer of gratitude in your heart. We do not want any verbal outbursts to detract from the sacred nature of this conference and the Lord's holy temples.

Today we are pleased to announce plans to construct more temples, to be built in the following locations:

Pago Pago, American Samoa; Okinawa City, Okinawa; Neiafu, Tonga; Tooele Valley, Utah; Moses Lake, Washington; San Pedro Sula, Honduras; Antofagasta, Chile; Budapest, Hungary.

Thank you, my dear brothers and sisters.

As we speak of our temples old and new, may each of us signify by our actions that we are true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. May we renovate our lives through our faith and trust in Him. May we access the power of His Atonement by our repentance each day. And may we dedicate and rededicate our lives to serving God and His children—on both sides of the veil.

I leave my love and blessing with you, assuring you that revelation continues in this, the Lord's Church. It will continue until "the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done."¹

I so bless you and bear my testimony that God lives! Jesus is the Christ! This is His Church. We are His people. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (2007), 142.

Witnesses, Aaronic Priesthood Quorums, and Young Women Classes

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

Oct 2019 | Saturday afternoon session | [Link](#)

The adjustments we will now announce are intended to help young men and young women develop their sacred personal potential.

Dear brothers and sisters, it is wonderful to be with you again in general conference. Earlier this week, announcements were made to members of the Church about changes in policy regarding who may serve as witnesses to baptism and sealing ordinances. I would like to highlight those three points.

1. A proxy baptism for a deceased person may be witnessed by anyone holding a current temple recommend, including a limited-use recommend.
2. Any endowed member with a current temple recommend may serve as a witness to sealing ordinances, living and proxy.
3. Any baptized member of the Church may serve as a witness of the baptism of a living person. This change pertains to all baptisms outside the temple.

These policy adjustments are procedural. The underlying doctrine and covenants are unchanged. They are equally efficacious in all ordinances. These changes should greatly enhance family participation in these ordinances.

I also wanted to speak with you at this time to introduce adjustments that pertain to our youth and their leaders.

You will remember that I have invited the youth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to enlist in the Lord's youth battalion to participate in the greatest cause on earth today—the gathering of Israel.¹ I issued this invitation to our youth because they are unusually gifted in reaching out to others and sharing what they believe in a convincing fashion. The cause of the gathering is an essential part of helping to prepare the world and its people for the Second Coming of the Lord.

In each ward, the Lord's youth battalion is led by a bishop, a dedicated servant of God. His first and foremost responsibility is to care for the young men and young women of his ward. The bishop and his counselors direct the work of the Aaronic Priesthood quorums and the Young Women classes in the ward.

The adjustments we will now announce are intended to help young men and young women develop their sacred personal potential. We also want to strengthen Aaronic Priesthood quorums and Young Women classes and provide support to bishops and other adult leaders as they serve this rising generation.

Elder Quentin L. Cook will now discuss the adjustments that relate to the young men. And tonight, at the general women's session, Sister Bonnie H. Cordon, Young Women General President, will discuss the adjustments that relate to the young women.

The First Presidency and the Twelve are united in endorsing these efforts to strengthen our youth. Oh, how we love them and pray for them! They are the "hope of Israel, Zion's army, children of the promised day."² We express our complete confidence in our youth and our gratitude for them. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Russell M. Nelson, "Hope of Israel" (worldwide devotional for youth, June 3, 2018), [HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

2. "Hope of Israel," *Hymns*, no. 259.

Spiritual Treasures

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2019 | Women's session | [Link](#)

As you exercise faith in the Lord and His priesthood power, your ability to draw upon this spiritual treasure that the Lord has made available will increase.

Thank you for that beautiful music. As we all stood to sing that intermediate hymn, “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet,” I had two overpowering thoughts come to me. One is about the Prophet Joseph Smith, the prophet of this dispensation. My love and admiration for him grows with every passing day. The second thought occurred as I looked at my wife, my daughters, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters. I felt like I’d like to claim every one of you as part of my family.

Several months ago, at the end of a temple endowment session, I said to my wife Wendy, “I hope the sisters understand the spiritual treasures that are theirs in the temple.” Sisters, I often find myself thinking about you, including two months ago when Wendy and I visited Harmony, Pennsylvania.

This was our second trip there. Both times we have been deeply moved as we walked on that sacred ground. It was near Harmony that John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and restored the Aaronic Priesthood.

It was there that the Apostles Peter, James, and John appeared to restore the Melchizedek Priesthood.

It was in Harmony that Emma Hale Smith served as her husband’s first scribe while the Prophet translated the Book of Mormon.

It was also in Harmony that Joseph received a revelation manifesting the Lord’s will to Emma. The Lord instructed Emma to expound the scriptures, to exhort the Church, to receive the Holy Ghost, and to spend her time “learning much.” Emma was also counseled to “lay aside the things of this world and seek for the things of a better” and to hold fast to her covenants with God. The Lord concluded His instruction with these compelling words: “This is my voice unto all.”¹

Everything that happened in this area has profound implications for *your* lives. The restoration of the priesthood, along with the Lord's counsel to Emma, can guide and bless each of you. How I yearn for you to understand that the restoration of the priesthood is just as relevant to you as a woman as it is to any man. Because the Melchizedek Priesthood has been restored, both covenant-keeping women and men have access to "*all* the spiritual blessings of the church"² or, we might say, to all the spiritual treasures the Lord has for His children.

Every woman and every man who makes covenants with God and keeps those covenants, and who participates worthily in priesthood ordinances, has direct access to the power of God. Those who are endowed in the house of the Lord receive a gift of God's priesthood power by virtue of their covenant, along with a gift of knowledge to know how to draw upon that power.

The heavens are just as open to *women* who are endowed with God's power flowing from their priesthood covenants as they are to men who bear the priesthood. I pray that truth will register upon each of your hearts because I believe it will change your life. Sisters, you have the right to draw liberally upon the Savior's power to help your family and others you love.

Now, you might be saying to yourself, "This sounds wonderful, but how do I do it? How do I draw the Savior's power into my life?"

You won't find this process spelled out in any manual. The Holy Ghost will be your personal tutor as you seek to understand what the Lord would have you know and do. This process is neither quick nor easy, but it *is* spiritually invigorating. What could possibly be more exciting than to labor with the Spirit to understand God's power—priesthood power?

What I *can* tell you is that accessing the power of God in your life requires the same things that the Lord instructed Emma and each of you to do.

So, I invite you to study prayerfully [section 25 of the Doctrine and Covenants](#) and discover what the Holy Ghost will teach *you*. Your personal spiritual endeavor will bring you joy as you gain, understand, and use the power with which you have been endowed.

Part of this endeavor will require you to put aside many things of this world. Sometimes we speak almost casually about walking away from the world with its contention, pervasive temptations, and false philosophies. But *truly* doing so requires you to

examine your life meticulously and regularly. As you do so, the Holy Ghost will prompt you about what is no longer needful, what is no longer worthy of your time and energy.

As you shift your focus away from worldly distractions, some things that seem important to you now will recede in priority. You will need to say no to some things, even though they may seem harmless. As you embark upon and continue this lifelong process of consecrating your life to the Lord, the changes in your perspective, feelings, and spiritual strength will amaze you!

Now a little word of warning. There are those who would undermine your ability to call upon the power of God. There are some who would have you doubt yourself and minimize your stellar spiritual capacity as a righteous woman.

Most certainly, the adversary does not want you to understand the covenant you made at baptism or the profound endowment of knowledge and power you have received or will receive in the temple—the house of the Lord. And Satan certainly does not want you to understand that every time you worthily serve and worship in the temple, you leave armed with God’s power and with His angels having “charge over” you.³

Satan and his minions will constantly contrive roadblocks to prevent you from understanding the spiritual gifts with which you have been and can be blessed. Unfortunately, some roadblocks may be the result of another’s misbehavior. It grieves me to think that any of you have felt marginalized or have not been believed by a priesthood leader or have been abused or betrayed by a husband, father, or a supposed friend. I feel deep sorrow that any of you have felt sidelined, disrespected, or misjudged. Such offenses have no place in the kingdom of God.

Conversely, it thrills me when I learn of priesthood leaders who eagerly seek the participation of women in ward and stake councils. I am inspired by each husband who demonstrates that his most important priesthood responsibility is to care for his wife.⁴ I praise that man who deeply respects his wife’s ability to receive revelation and treasures her as an equal partner in their marriage.

When a man understands the majesty and power of a righteous, seeking, endowed Latter-day Saint woman, is it any wonder that he feels like standing when she enters the room?

From the dawning of time, women have been blessed with a unique moral compass—the ability to distinguish right from wrong. This gift is enhanced in those who make and keep covenants. And it diminishes in those who willfully ignore the commandments of God.

I hasten to add that I do not absolve men in any way from God's requirement for *them also* to distinguish between right and wrong. But my dear sisters, your ability to discern truth from error, to be society's guardians of morality, is crucial in these latter days. And we depend upon you to teach others to do likewise. Let me be very clear about this: if the world loses the moral rectitude of its women, the world will *never* recover.

We Latter-day Saints are not of the world; we are of covenant Israel. We are called to prepare a people for the Second Coming of the Lord.

Now, may I clarify several additional points with respect to women and priesthood. When you are set apart to serve in a calling under the direction of one who holds priesthood keys—such as your bishop or stake president—you are given priesthood authority to function in that calling.

Similarly, in the holy temple you are authorized to perform and officiate in priesthood ordinances *every time* you attend. Your temple endowment prepares you to do so.

If you are endowed but not currently married to a man who bears the priesthood and someone says to you, "I'm sorry you don't have the priesthood in your home," please understand that that statement is incorrect. You may not have a priesthood *bearer* in your home, but you have received and made sacred covenants with God in His temple. From those covenants flows an endowment of His priesthood power upon you. And remember, if your husband should die, *you* would preside in your home.

As a righteous, endowed Latter-day Saint woman, you speak and teach with power and authority from God. Whether by exhortation or conversation, we need your voice teaching the doctrine of Christ. We need your input in family, ward, and stake councils. Your participation is essential and never ornamental!

My dear sisters, your power will increase as you serve others. Your prayers, fasting, time in the scriptures, service in the temple, and family history work will open the heavens to you.

I entreat you to study prayerfully *all* the truths you can find about priesthood power. You might begin with [Doctrine and Covenants sections 84](#) and [107](#). Those sections will lead you to other passages. The scriptures and teachings by modern prophets, seers, and revelators are filled with these truths. As your understanding increases and as you exercise faith in the Lord and His priesthood power, your ability to draw upon this spiritual treasure that the Lord has made available will increase. As you do so, you will find yourselves better able to help create eternal families that are united, sealed in the temple of the Lord, and full of love for our Heavenly Father and for Jesus Christ.

All our efforts to minister to each other, proclaim the gospel, perfect the Saints, and redeem the dead converge in the holy temple. We now have 166 temples throughout the world, and more are coming.

As you know, the Salt Lake Temple, Temple Square, and the adjoining plaza near the Church Office Building will be renewed in a project that will begin at the close of this year. *This* sacred temple must be preserved and prepared to inspire future generations, just as it has influenced us in this generation.

As the Church grows, more temples will be built so that more families can have access to that greatest of all blessings, that of eternal life.⁵ We regard a temple as *the* most sacred structure in the Church. Whenever plans are announced to construct a new temple, it becomes an important part of our history. As we have discussed here tonight, you sisters are vital to the work of the temple, and the temple is where you will receive your highest spiritual treasures.

Please listen carefully and reverently as I will now announce plans to build eight new temples. If one is announced in a place that is meaningful to you, I suggest that you simply bow your head prayerfully with gratitude in your heart. We are pleased to announce plans to construct temples in the following locations: Freetown, Sierra Leone; Orem, Utah; Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; Bentonville, Arkansas; Bacolod, Philippines; McAllen, Texas; Cobán, Guatemala; and Taylorsville, Utah. Thank you, dear sisters. We deeply appreciate your receipt of these plans and your reverent response.

Now, in closing, I would like to leave a blessing upon you, that you may understand the priesthood power with which you have been endowed and that you will augment that power by exercising your faith in the Lord and in His power.

Dear sisters, with deep respect and gratitude, I express my love for you. Humbly, I declare that God lives! Jesus is the Christ. This is His Church. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 25:7–16.

2. Doctrine and Covenants 107:18; emphasis added.

3. Doctrine and Covenants 109:22.

4. See Doctrine and Covenants 131:2–4.

5. See Doctrine and Covenants 14:7.

The Second Great Commandment

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2019 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

Our greatest joy comes as we help our brothers and sisters.

My dear brothers and sisters, thank you for all you are doing to help gather Israel on both sides of the veil, to strengthen your families, and to bless the lives of those in need. Thank you for living as true followers of Jesus Christ.¹ You know and love to obey His two great commandments, to love God and to love your neighbors.²

During the last six months, Sister Nelson and I have met thousands of Saints as we have traveled to Central and South America, the islands of the Pacific, and various cities in the United States. As we travel, our hope is to build *your* faith. Yet we always return having had *our* faith strengthened by the members and friends we meet. May I share three meaningful moments from our recent experiences?

In May, Sister Nelson and I traveled with Elder Gerrit W. and Sister Susan Gong to the South Pacific. While in Auckland, New Zealand, we had the honor of meeting with imams from two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, where just two months earlier, innocent worshippers had been gunned down in an act of horrible violence.

We extended our sympathy to these brothers of another faith and reaffirmed our mutual commitment to religious freedom.

We also offered volunteer labor and modest financial assistance to rebuild their mosques. Our meeting with these Muslim leaders was filled with tender expressions of brotherhood.

In August, along with Elder Quentin L. and Sister Mary Cook, Sister Nelson and I met individuals in Buenos Aires, Argentina—most of them not of our faith—whose lives have been changed by wheelchairs provided to them through our Latter-day Saint Charities. We were inspired as they expressed joy-filled gratitude for their newfound mobility.

A third precious moment occurred just a few weeks ago here in Salt Lake City. It came from a unique letter I received on my birthday from a young woman I will call Mary—age 14.

Mary wrote about things she and I had in common: “You have 10 kids. We have 10 kids. You speak Mandarin. Seven of the kids in my family, including me, were adopted from China, so Mandarin is our first language. You are a heart surgeon. My sister has had two open-heart [operations]. You like two-hour church. We like two-hour church. You have perfect pitch. My brother has perfect pitch too. He is blind like me.”

Mary’s words touched me deeply, revealing not only her great spirit but also the consecration of her mother and father.

Latter-day Saints, as with other followers of Jesus Christ, are always looking for ways to help, to lift, and to love others. They who are willing to be called the Lord’s people “are willing to bear one another’s burdens, ... to mourn with those that mourn; ... and [to] comfort those that stand in need of comfort.”³

They truly seek to live the first and second great commandments. When we love *God* with all our hearts, He turns our hearts to the well-being of *others* in a beautiful, virtuous cycle.

It would be impossible to calculate the amount of service that Latter-day Saints render around the globe every day of every year, but it *is* possible to calculate the good the Church as an organization does to bless men and women—boys and girls—who are in need of a helping hand.

The Church’s humanitarian outreach was launched in 1984. Then a Churchwide fast was held to raise funds to assist those afflicted by a devastating drought in eastern Africa. Church members donated \$6.4 million on that *single* fast day.

Then-Elder M. Russell Ballard and Brother Glenn L. Pace were dispatched to Ethiopia to assess how those consecrated funds could best be used. This effort proved to be the beginning of what would later be known as Latter-day Saint Charities.

Since that time, Latter-day Saint Charities has provided more than *two billion* dollars in aid to assist those in need throughout the world. This assistance is offered to recipients regardless of their church affiliation, nationality, race, sexual orientation, gender, or political persuasion.

That is not all. To assist members of the Lord's Church in distress, we love and live the ancient law of the fast.⁴ We go hungry to help others who are hungry. One day each month, we go without food and donate the cost of that food (and more) to help those in need.

I will never forget my first visit to West Africa in 1986. The Saints came to our meetings in great numbers. Though they had little in terms of material possessions, most came dressed in spotless white clothing.

I asked the stake president how he cared for members who had so little. He replied that their bishops knew their people well. If members could afford two meals a day, no help was needed. But if they could afford only one meal or less—even with family help—bishops provided food, financed from fast offerings. Then he added this remarkable fact: their fast-offering contributions usually *exceeded* their expenses. Surplus fast offerings were then sent to people *elsewhere* whose needs exceeded theirs. Those stalwart African Saints taught me a great lesson about the power of the *law* and the *spirit* of the fast.

As members of the Church, we feel a kinship to those who suffer in any way.⁵ As sons and daughters of God, we are all brothers and sisters. We heed an Old Testament admonition: "Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy."⁶

We also strive to live the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in [Matthew 25](#):

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

"Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me. ...

"... Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."⁷

Let me cite just a few examples of how the Church follows these teachings of the Savior.

To help relieve hunger, the Church operates 124 bishops' storehouses throughout the world. Through them, approximately 400,000 food orders are given each year to individuals in need. In locations where no storehouse exists, bishops and branch presidents draw from fast-offering funds of the Church to provide food and supplies for their needy members.

However, the challenge of hunger goes far beyond the boundaries of the Church. It is increasing throughout the world. A recent United Nations report indicated that the number of undernourished people in the world now exceeds 820 million—or almost one in nine of the earth’s inhabitants.⁸

What a sobering statistic! How grateful we are for your contributions. Thanks to your heartfelt generosity, millions throughout the world will receive much-needed food, clothing, temporary shelter, wheelchairs, medicines, clean water, and more.

Much sickness throughout the world is caused because of unclean water. To date, the Church’s humanitarian initiative has helped provide clean water in hundreds of communities in 76 countries.

A project in Luputa, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is a great example. With a population exceeding 100,000, the town had *no running water*. Citizens had to walk long distances for sources of safe water. A mountain spring was discovered 18 miles (29 km) away, but townspeople could not access that water on a regular basis.

When our humanitarian missionaries learned about this challenge, they worked with the leaders of Luputa by supplying materials and training to pipe the water to the city. The people of Luputa spent *three years* digging a one-meter-deep trench through rock and jungle. By working together, the joyful day finally arrived when fresh, clean water was available to all in that village.

The Church also helps refugees, whether from civil strife, the ravages of nature, or religious persecution. More than 70 million people are now displaced from their homes.⁹

In the year 2018 alone, the Church provided emergency supplies to refugees in 56 countries. In addition, many Church members volunteer their time to help refugees integrate into new communities. We thank every one of you who reach out to help those who are trying to establish new homes.

Through generous donations to Deseret Industries outlets in the United States, millions of pounds of clothing are collected and sorted each year. While local bishops use this vast inventory to help members in need, the *greatest* portion is donated to other charitable organizations who distribute the items worldwide.

And just last year, the Church provided vision care for more than 300,000 people in 35 countries, newborn care for thousands of mothers and infants in 39 countries, and wheelchairs for more than 50,000 people living in dozens of countries.

The Church is well known for being among the first responders when tragedy strikes. Even *before* a hurricane hits, Church leaders and staff in the affected locations are mapping out plans for how they will deliver relief supplies and volunteer assistance to those who will be impacted.

Last year alone, the Church carried out more than 100 disaster-relief projects around the world, helping victims of hurricanes, fires, floods, earthquakes, and other calamities. Whenever possible, our Church members in yellow Helping Hands vests mobilize in great numbers to help those afflicted by the disaster. This kind of service, rendered by so many of you, is the very essence of ministering.

My dear brothers and sisters, the activities I have described are merely a small part of the growing welfare and humanitarian outreach of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.¹⁰ And *you* are the ones who make all this possible. Because of your exemplary lives, your generous hearts, and your helping hands, it is no wonder that many communities and government leaders are praising your efforts.¹¹

Since becoming President of the Church, I have been amazed at how many presidents, prime ministers, and ambassadors have sincerely thanked me for our humanitarian aid to their people. And they have also expressed gratitude for the strength that our faithful members bring to their country as loyal, contributing citizens.

I have also marveled as world leaders have visited the First Presidency expressing *their hope* for the Church to be established in their lands. Why? Because they know that Latter-day Saints will help to build strong families and communities, making life better for others *wherever* they live.

Regardless of where we call home, members of the Church feel passionately about the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Thus, *our* greatest joy comes as we help our brothers and sisters, no matter where we live in this wonderful world.

Giving help to others—making a conscientious effort to care about others as much as or *more* than we care about ourselves—is our joy. Especially, I might add, when it is not convenient and when it takes us out of our comfort zone. *Living* that second great commandment is the *key* to becoming a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

My dear brothers and sisters, you are living exemplars of the fruits that come from following the teachings of Jesus Christ. I thank you! I love you!

I know that God lives. Jesus is the Christ. His Church has been restored in these latter days to fulfill its divine purposes. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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1. See Moroni 7:48.
 2. See Matthew 22:37–39; Luke 10:27.
 3. Mosiah 18:8–9.
 4. See Isaiah 58:3–12.
 5. In early Church history, courageous pioneers were also hungry, homeless, and harassed.
 6. Deuteronomy 15:11.
 7. Matthew 25:35–36, 40.
 8. See Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and others, The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019, 6, fao.org/3/ca5162en/ca5162en.pdf.
 9. See “Worldwide Displacement Tops 70 Million, UN Refugee Chief Urges Greater Solidarity in Response,” United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees website, June 19, 2019, unhcr.org/en-us.
 10. For additional information on the Church’s charitable efforts, please see ChurchofJesusChrist.org/topics/welfare; LatterDaySaintCharities.org; facebook.com/LatterDaySaintCharities; JustServe.org.
 11. “The most effective tract we will carry will be the goodness of our own lives and example” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “Find the Lambs, Feed the Sheep,” *Ensign*, May 1999, 107; *Liahona*, July 1999, 121).

Closing Remarks

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

Oct 2019 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

Individual worthiness requires a total conversion of mind and heart to be more like the Lord.

My beloved brothers and sisters, as we come to the end of this historic conference, we thank the Lord for inspiring the messages and the music that have edified us. We have truly enjoyed a spiritual feast.

We know the restored gospel of Jesus Christ will bring hope and joy to people who will hear and heed His doctrine. We also know that each home can become a true sanctuary of faith, where peace, love, and the Spirit of the Lord may dwell.

Of course, the crowning jewel of the Restoration is the holy temple. Its sacred ordinances and covenants are pivotal to preparing a people who are ready to welcome the Savior at His Second Coming. Presently we have 166 dedicated temples, and more are coming.

An open house will be held prior to the dedication of each new and renovated temple. Many friends not of our faith will participate in tours of those temples and will learn something about temple blessings. And some of those visitors will be moved upon to know more. Some will sincerely ask how they might qualify for the blessings of the temple.

As members of the Church, we need to be prepared to answer their questions. We can explain that the blessings of the temple are available to any and all people who will prepare themselves. But before they can enter a dedicated temple, they need to qualify. The Lord wants all His children to partake of the eternal blessings available in His temple. He has directed what each person must do to qualify to enter His holy house.

A good place for us to begin such a teaching opportunity is to call attention to the words etched on the temple's exterior: "Holiness to the Lord: The House of the Lord." President Henry B. Eyring's message today and many others have inspired us to

become more holy. Each temple is a holy place; each temple patron strives to become more holy.

All requirements to enter the temple relate to personal holiness. To assess that readiness, each person who wants to enjoy the blessings of the temple will have two interviews: first with a bishop, bishopric counselor, or branch president; second with a stake or mission president or one of his counselors. In those interviews, several questions will be asked.

Some of those questions have recently been edited for clarity. I would like to review them for you now:

1. Do you have faith in and a testimony of God, the Eternal Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost?
2. Do you have a testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and of His role as your Savior and Redeemer?
3. Do you have a testimony of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ?
4. Do you sustain the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the prophet, seer, and revelator and as the only person on the earth authorized to exercise all priesthood keys?

Do you sustain the members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as prophets, seers, and revelators?

Do you sustain the other General Authorities and local leaders of the Church?

5. The Lord has said that all things are to be “done in cleanliness” before Him ([Doctrine and Covenants 42:41](#)).

Do you strive for moral cleanliness in your thoughts and behavior?

Do you obey the law of chastity?

6. Do you follow the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ in your private and public behavior with members of your family and others?
7. Do you support or promote any teachings, practices, or doctrine contrary to those of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?

8. Do you strive to keep the Sabbath day holy, both at home and at church; attend your meetings; prepare for and worthily partake of the sacrament; and live your life in harmony with the laws and commandments of the gospel?
9. Do you strive to be honest in all that you do?
10. Are you a full-tithe payer?
11. Do you understand and obey the Word of Wisdom?
12. Do you have any financial or other obligations to a former spouse or to children?
If yes, are you current in meeting those obligations?
13. Do you keep the covenants that you made in the temple, including wearing the temple garment as instructed in the endowment?
14. Are there serious sins in your life that need to be resolved with priesthood authorities as part of your repentance?
15. Do you consider yourself worthy to enter the Lord's house and participate in temple ordinances?

Tomorrow, these revised temple recommend questions will be distributed to Church leaders throughout the world.

In addition to their answering those questions honestly, it is understood that each adult temple patron will wear the sacred garment of the priesthood under their regular clothing. This is symbolic of an inner commitment to strive each day to become more like the Lord. It also reminds us to remain faithful each day to covenants made and to walk on the covenant path each day in a higher and holier way.

Now, for just a moment, I would like to speak to our youth. We encourage you to qualify for limited-use temple recommends. You will be asked only those questions applicable to you in your preparation for the ordinances of proxy baptism and confirmation. We are very grateful for your worthiness and willingness to participate in that sacred temple work. We thank you!

Individual worthiness to enter the Lord's house requires much individual spiritual preparation. But with the Lord's help, nothing is impossible. In some respects, it is easier to build a temple than it is to build a people prepared for a temple. Individual

worthiness requires a total conversion of mind and heart to be more like the Lord, to be an honest citizen, to be a better example, and to be a holier person.

I testify that such preparatory work brings innumerable blessings in this life and inconceivable blessings for the life to come, including the perpetuation of your family unit throughout all eternity “in a state of never-ending happiness.”¹

Now I would like to turn to another topic: plans for the coming year. In the springtime of the year 2020, it will be exactly 200 years since Joseph Smith experienced the theophany that we know as the First Vision. God the Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph, a 14-year-old youth. That event marked the onset of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness, precisely as foretold in the Holy Bible.²

Then came a succession of visits from heavenly messengers, including Moroni, John the Baptist, and the early Apostles Peter, James, and John. Others followed, including Moses, Elias, and Elijah. Each brought divine authority to bless God’s children on the earth once again.

Miraculously, we have also received the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ, a companion scripture to the Holy Bible. The revelations published in the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price have also greatly enriched our understanding of God’s commandments and eternal truth.

The keys and offices of the priesthood have been restored, including the offices of Apostle, Seventy, patriarch, high priest, elder, bishop, priest, teacher, and deacon. And women who love the Lord serve valiantly in the Relief Society, Primary, Young Women, Sunday School, and other Church callings—all vital parts of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness.

Thus, the year 2020 will be designated as a bicentennial year. General conference next April will be different from any previous conference. In the next six months, I hope that every member and every family will prepare for a unique conference that will commemorate the very foundations of the restored gospel.

You may wish to begin your preparation by reading afresh Joseph Smith’s account of the First Vision as recorded in the Pearl of Great Price. Our course of study for next year in *Come, Follow Me* is the Book of Mormon. You may wish to ponder important questions such as, “How would my life be different if my knowledge gained from the Book of Mormon were suddenly taken away?” or “How have the events that followed

the First Vision made a difference for me and my loved ones?" Also, with the Book of Mormon videos now becoming available, you may wish to incorporate them in your individual and family study.

Select your own questions. Design your own plan. Immerse yourself in the glorious light of the Restoration. As you do, general conference next April will be not only memorable; it will be unforgettable.

Now in closing, I leave with you my love and my blessing that each of you may become happier and holier with each passing day. Meanwhile, please be assured that revelation continues in the Church and will continue under the Lord's direction until "the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done."³

I so bless you, reaffirming my love for you, with my testimony that God lives! Jesus is the Christ! This is His Church and we are His people. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Mosiah 2:41.

2. See Isaiah 2:2; 29; Ezekiel 37:15–20, 26–28; Daniel 2:44; Amos 3:7; Acts 3:21; Ephesians 1:10; Revelation 14:6.

3. Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (2007), 142.

Opening Message

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2020 | Saturday morning session | [Link](#)

We are to seek, in every way we can, to hear Jesus Christ, who speaks to us through the power and ministering of the Holy Ghost.

My beloved brothers and sisters, as we welcome you to this historic April 2020 general conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for reasons you know, I stand before you in an empty auditorium!

Little did I know, when I promised you at the October 2019 general conference that this April conference would be “memorable” and “unforgettable,” that speaking to a visible congregation of fewer than 10 people would make this conference so memorable and unforgettable *for me!* Yet the knowledge that you are participating by electronic transmission, and the choir’s beautiful rendition of “It Is Well with My Soul,” bring great comfort to *my* soul.

As you know, attendance at this general conference has been strictly limited as part of our efforts to be good global citizens and do all we can to limit the spread of COVID-19. This virus has had a major impact throughout the world. It has also altered our Church meetings, missionary service, and temple work for a while.

Though today’s restrictions relate to a virulent virus, life’s personal trials stretch far beyond this pandemic. Future trials could result from an accident, a natural disaster, or an unexpected personal heartache.

How can we endure such trials? The Lord has told us that “if ye are prepared ye shall not fear.”¹ Of course, we can store our own reserves of food, water, and savings. But equally crucial is our need to fill our personal *spiritual* storehouses with faith, truth, and testimony.

Our ultimate quest in life is to prepare to meet our Maker. We do this by striving daily to become more like our Savior, Jesus Christ.² And we do *that* as we repent daily and receive His cleansing, healing, and strengthening power. Then we can feel enduring

peace and joy, even during turbulent times. This is exactly why the Lord has implored us to stand in holy places and “be not moved.”³

This year, we commemorate the 200th anniversary of one of the most significant events in the history of the world—namely, the appearance of God the Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to Joseph Smith. During that singular vision, God the Father pointed to Jesus Christ and said: “This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!”⁴

That admonition given to Joseph is for each of us. We are to seek, in every way we can, to hear Jesus Christ, who speaks to us through the power and ministering of the Holy Ghost.

The purpose of this and every general conference is to help us to hear Him. We have prayed, and invite you to pray, that the Spirit of the Lord will be with us in such rich abundance that you can hear the messages that the Savior has especially for you—messages that will bring peace to your soul. Messages that will heal your broken heart. Messages that will illuminate your mind. Messages that will help you know what to do as you move ahead through times of turmoil and trial.

We pray that this conference will be memorable and unforgettable because of the messages you will hear, the unique announcements which will be made, and the experiences in which you will be invited to participate.

For example, at the conclusion of the Sunday morning session, we will convene a worldwide solemn assembly when I will lead you in the sacred Hosanna Shout. We pray that this will be a spiritual highlight for you as we express in global unison our profound gratitude to God the Father and His Beloved Son by praising Them in this unique way.

For this sacred experience, we use clean white handkerchiefs. But if you do not have one, you may simply wave your hand. At the conclusion of the Hosanna Shout, the congregation will join with the choir in singing “The Spirit of God.”⁵

My dear brothers and sisters, this conference will be magnificent. This year will be extraordinary as we focus intently on the Savior and His restored gospel. The most important lasting effects of this historic conference will be as our hearts change and we commence a lifelong quest to hear Him.

Welcome to April 2020 general conference! I know that God, our Heavenly Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ, are mindful of us. They will be with us throughout the proceedings

of these two glorious days as we seek to draw closer to Them and honor Them. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Doctrine and Covenants 38:30.
2. See 3 Nephi 27:27.
3. Doctrine and Covenants 87:8.
4. Joseph Smith—History 1:17.
5. Hymns, no. 2.

Opening the Heavens for Help

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2020 | Saturday evening session | [Link](#)

Let us put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ into action!

What a unique and wonderful session this has been! Thank you, dear Laudy and Enzo. You represented the magnificent young women and young men of the Church so very well.

My dear brothers and sisters, we have heard much today about the Restoration of the Church—the very Church that our Savior, Jesus Christ, established during His earthly ministry. That Restoration began 200 years ago this spring when God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to the young Joseph Smith.

Ten years after this transcendent vision, the Prophet Joseph Smith and five others were called as founding members of the Lord's restored Church.

From that small group assembled on April 6, 1830, has come a global organization of more than 16 million members. The good this Church accomplishes around the world to alleviate human suffering and provide uplift for humankind is widely known. But its prime purpose is to help men, women, and children follow the Lord Jesus Christ, keep His commandments, and qualify for the greatest of all blessings—that of eternal life with God and their loved ones.¹

As we commemorate the event that was launched in 1820, it is important to remember that while we revere Joseph Smith as a prophet of God, this is not the church of Joseph Smith, nor is it the church of Mormon. This is the Church of Jesus Christ. He decreed exactly what His Church should be called: “For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”²

I have spoken previously about a needed course correction in the way we refer to the name of the Church.³ Since that time, much has been done to accomplish this correction. I am very grateful to President M. Russell Ballard and the entire Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who have done so much to lead these efforts as well as those related to another initiative that I will announce this evening.

Church leaders and departments, related entities, and millions of members—and others—now use the correct name of the Church. The Church’s official style guide has been adjusted. The Church’s principal website is now [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org). Addresses for email, domain names, and social media channels have been updated. Our beloved choir is now the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square.

We have gone to these extraordinary efforts because when we remove the Lord’s name from the name of *His Church*, we inadvertently remove *Him* as the central focus of our worship and our lives. When we take the Savior’s name upon us at baptism, we commit to witness, by our words, thoughts, and actions, that Jesus is the Christ.⁴

Previously, I promised that if we would “do our best to restore the correct name of the Lord’s Church,” He would “pour down His power and blessings upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints, the likes of which we have never seen.”⁵ I renew that promise today.

To help us remember Him and to identify The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the *Lord’s Church*, we are pleased to introduce a symbol that will signify the central place of Jesus Christ in His Church.

This symbol includes the name of the Church contained within a cornerstone. Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone.⁶

At the center of the symbol is a representation of Thorvaldsen’s marble statue the Christus. It portrays the resurrected, *living* Lord reaching out to embrace all who will come unto Him.

Symbolically, Jesus Christ is standing under an arch. The arch reminds us of the resurrected Savior emerging from the tomb on the third day following His Crucifixion.

This symbol should feel familiar to many, as we have long identified the restored gospel with the *living*, resurrected Christ.

The symbol will now be used as a visual identifier for official literature, news, and events of the Church.⁷ It will remind all that this is the Savior’s Church and that all we do as members of His Church centers on Jesus Christ and His gospel.

Now, my dear brothers and sisters, tomorrow is Palm Sunday, as Elder Gong has so eloquently taught. Then we enter the special week that culminates with Easter. As followers of Jesus Christ, living in a day when the COVID-19 pandemic has put the whole world in commotion, let us not just talk of Christ or preach of Christ or employ a symbol representing Christ.

Let us put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ into action!

As you know, members of the Church observe the law of the fast one day each month.

The doctrine of fasting is ancient. It has been practiced by biblical heroes from the earliest days. Moses, David, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Isaiah, Daniel, Joel, and many others fasted and preached of fasting.⁸ Through Isaiah's writings, the Lord said: "Is *not* this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free?"⁹

The Apostle Paul admonished Saints in Corinth to "give yourselves to fasting and prayer."¹⁰ The Savior Himself declared that certain things go "not out *but* by prayer and fasting."¹¹

I said recently in a social media video that "as a physician and surgeon, I have great admiration for medical professionals, scientists, and all who are working around the clock to curb the spread of COVID-19."¹²

Now, as President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, I *know* that God "has all power, all wisdom, and all understanding; he comprehendeth all things, and he is a merciful Being, even unto salvation, to those who will repent and believe on his name."¹³

So, during times of deep distress, as when illness reaches pandemic proportions, the most natural thing for us to do is to call upon our Heavenly Father and His Son—the Master Healer—to show forth Their marvelous power to bless the people of the earth.

In my video message, I invited all to join in fasting on Sunday, March 29, 2020. Many of you may have seen the video and joined in the fast. Some may have not. Now we still need help from heaven.

So tonight, my dear brothers and sisters, in the spirit of the sons of Mosiah, who gave themselves to much fasting and prayer,¹⁴ and as part of our April 2020 general conference, I am calling for another worldwide fast. For all whose health may permit, let us fast, pray, and unite our faith once again. Let us prayerfully plead for relief from this global pandemic.

I invite *all*, including those not of our faith, to fast and pray on Good Friday, April 10, that the present pandemic may be controlled, caregivers protected, the economy strengthened, and life normalized.

How do we fast? Two meals or a period of 24 hours is customary. But you decide what would constitute a sacrifice for you, as you remember the supreme sacrifice the Savior made for you. Let us unite in pleading for healing throughout the world.

Good Friday would be *the* perfect day to have our Heavenly Father and His Son hear *us*!

Dear brothers and sisters, I express my deep love for you, along with my testimony of the divinity of the work in which we are engaged. This *is* The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He stands at its head and directs all that we do. I know that He will respond to the pleadings of His people. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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1. See Doctrine and Covenants 14:7.
 2. Doctrine and Covenants 115:4.
 3. See Russell M. Nelson, "The Correct Name of the Church," Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2018, 87–89.
 4. See Russell M. Nelson, "The Correct Name of the Church," 88.
 5. Russell M. Nelson, "The Correct Name of the Church," 89.
 6. See Ephesians 2:20.
 7. To respect the sacred nature of the Church symbol and preserve legal protection, the Church's official symbol is to be used only as approved by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Further information may be obtained by contacting the Church's Intellectual Property Office at cor-intellectualproperty@ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
 8. See Exodus 34:28; 2 Samuel 12:16; Ezra 10:6; Nehemiah 1:4; Esther 4:16; Isaiah 58:3; Daniel 9:3; Joel 2:12.
 9. Isaiah 58:6; emphasis added.
 10. 1 Corinthians 7:5.
 11. Matthew 17:21; emphasis added.
 12. Russell M. Nelson, in "Prophet Invites All to Fast and Pray for Relief from COVID-19," Mar. 26, 2020, newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
 13. Alma 26:35.
 14. See Alma 17:3.

Hear Him

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2020 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

Our Father knows that when we are surrounded by uncertainty and fear, what will help us the very most is to hear His Son.

My dear brothers and sisters, how thankful I am that through the use of technology we have been able to meet together and worship on this Sunday morning. How blessed we are to know that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored to the earth!

In the past several weeks, most of us have experienced disruptions in our personal lives. Earthquakes, fires, floods, plagues, and their aftermaths have disrupted routines and caused shortages of food, staples, and savings.

Amidst all of this, we commend you and thank you for choosing to hear the word of the Lord during this time of turmoil by joining with us for general conference. The increasing darkness that accompanies tribulation makes the light of Jesus Christ shine ever brighter. Just think of the good each of us can do during this time of global upheaval. Your love of and faith in the Savior may very well be the catalyst for someone to discover the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the past two years, Sister Nelson and I have met with thousands of you around the world. We have convened with you in outdoor arenas and in hotel ballrooms. In each location, I have felt that I was in the presence of the Lord's elect and that I was seeing the gathering of Israel occur before my eyes.

We live in the day that "our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation."¹ We have front-row seats to *witness live* what the prophet Nephi saw *only in vision*, that "the power of the Lamb of God" would descend "upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory."²

You, my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw. Think of that!

Regardless of where you live or what your circumstances are, the Lord Jesus Christ is *your* Savior, and God's prophet Joseph Smith is *your* prophet. He was foreordained before the foundation of the earth to be the prophet of this last dispensation, when "nothing shall be withheld"³ from the Saints. Revelation continues to flow from the Lord during this ongoing process of restoration.

What does it mean for you that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored to the earth?

It means that you and your family can be sealed together forever! It means that because you have been baptized by one who has authority from Jesus Christ and have been confirmed a member of His Church, you can enjoy the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. He will guide and protect you. It means you will never be left comfortless or without access to the power of God to help you. It means that priesthood power can bless you as you receive essential ordinances and make covenants with God and keep them. What an anchor to our souls are these truths, especially during these times when the tempest is raging.

The Book of Mormon chronicles the classic rise and fall of two major civilizations. Their history demonstrates how easy it is for a majority of the people to forget God, reject warnings of the Lord's prophets, and seek power, popularity, and pleasures of the flesh.⁴ Repeatedly, past prophets have declared "great and marvelous things unto the people, which they did not believe."⁵

It is no different in our day. Through the years, great and marvelous things have been heard from dedicated pulpits across the earth. Yet most people do *not* embrace these truths—either because they do not know where to look for them⁶ or because they are listening to those who do not have the whole truth or because they have rejected truth in favor of worldly pursuits.

The adversary is clever. For millennia he has been making good look evil and evil look good.⁷ His messages tend to be loud, bold, and boastful.

However, messages from our Heavenly Father are strikingly different. He communicates simply, quietly, and with such stunning plainness that we cannot misunderstand Him.⁸

For example, whenever He has introduced His Only Begotten Son to mortals upon the earth, He has done so with remarkably few words. On the Mount of Transfiguration to Peter, James, and John, God said, "This is my beloved Son: hear him."⁹ His words to the

Nephites in ancient Bountiful were “Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him.”¹⁰ And to Joseph Smith, in that profound declaration that opened this dispensation, God simply said, “*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*”¹¹

Now, my dear brothers and sisters, consider the fact that in these three instances just mentioned, just before the Father introduced the Son, the people involved were in a state of fear and, to some degree, desperation.

The Apostles were afraid when they saw Jesus Christ encircled by a cloud on the Mount of Transfiguration.

The Nephites were afraid because they had been through destruction and darkness for several days.

Joseph Smith was in the grips of a force of darkness just before the heavens opened.

Our Father knows that when we are surrounded by uncertainty and fear, what will help us the very most is to hear His Son.

Because when we seek to hear—truly hear—His Son, we will be guided to know what to do in any circumstance.

The very first word in the Doctrine and Covenants is *hearken*.¹² It means “to listen with the intent to obey.”¹³ To *hearken* means to “hear Him”—to *hear* what the Savior says and then to *heed* His counsel. In those two words—“Hear Him”—God gives us the pattern for success, happiness, and joy in this life. We are to *hear* the words of the Lord, *hearken* to them, and *heed* what He has told us!

As we seek to be disciples of Jesus Christ, our efforts to *hear Him* need to be ever more intentional. It takes conscious and consistent effort to fill our daily lives with His words, His teachings, His truths.

We simply cannot rely upon information we bump into on social media. With billions of words online and in a marketing-saturated world constantly infiltrated by noisy, nefarious efforts of the adversary, where *can* we go to hear Him?

We can go to the scriptures. They teach us about Jesus Christ and His gospel, the magnitude of His Atonement, and our Father’s great plan of happiness and redemption. Daily immersion in the word of God is crucial for spiritual survival, especially in these

days of increasing upheaval. As we feast on the words of Christ daily, the words of Christ will tell us how to respond to difficulties we never thought we would face.

We can also *hear Him* in the temple. The house of the Lord *is* a house of learning. There the Lord teaches in His own way. There each ordinance teaches about the Savior. There we learn how to part the veil and communicate more clearly with heaven. There we learn how to rebuke the adversary and draw upon the Lord's priesthood power to strengthen us and those we love. How eager each of us should be to seek refuge there.

When these temporary COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, please schedule regular time to worship and serve in the temple. Every minute of that time will bless you and your family in ways *nothing* else can. Take time to ponder what you hear and feel when you are there. Ask the Lord to teach you how to open the heavens to bless your life and the lives of those you love and serve.

While worshipping in the temple is presently not possible, I invite you to increase your participation in family history, including family history research and indexing. I promise that as you increase your time in temple and family history work, you will increase and improve your ability to hear Him.

We also *hear Him* more clearly as we refine our ability to recognize the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. It has never been more imperative to know how the Spirit speaks to you than right now. In the Godhead, the Holy Ghost is the messenger. He will bring thoughts to your mind which the Father and Son want you to receive. He is the Comforter. He will bring a feeling of peace to your heart. He testifies of truth and will confirm what is true as you hear and read the word of the Lord.

I renew my plea for you to do *whatever* it takes to increase your spiritual capacity to receive personal revelation.

Doing so will help you know how to move ahead with your life, what to do during times of crisis, and how to discern and avoid the temptations and the deceptions of the adversary.

And, finally, we *hear Him* as we heed the words of prophets, seers, and revelators. Ordained Apostles of Jesus Christ always testify of Him. They point the way as we make our way through the heart-wrenching maze of our mortal experiences.

What will happen as you more intentionally hear, hearken, and heed what the Savior has said and what He is saying now through His prophets? I promise that you will be blessed with additional power to deal with temptation, struggles, and weakness. I

promise miracles in your marriage, family relationships, and daily work. And I promise that your capacity to feel joy will increase even if turbulence increases in your life.

This April 2020 general conference is our time to commemorate an event that changed the world. As we anticipated this 200th anniversary of Joseph Smith's First Vision, the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles wondered what we might do to commemorate appropriately this singular event.

That theophany initiated the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ and ushered in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

We wondered if a monument should be erected. But as we considered the unique historic and international impact of that First Vision, we felt impressed to create a monument not of granite or stone but of words—words of solemn and sacred proclamation—written, not to be carved in “tables of stone” but rather to be etched in the “fleshy tables” of our hearts.¹⁴

Since the Church was organized, only five proclamations have been issued, with the last being “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” presented by President Gordon B. Hinckley in 1995.

Now as we contemplate this significant time in the history of the world and the Lord's charge to gather scattered Israel in preparation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, we, the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles, issue the following proclamation. Its title is “The Restoration of the Fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: A Bicentennial Proclamation to the World.” It is authored by the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is dated April 2020. To prepare for today, I previously recorded this proclamation in the Sacred Grove, where Joseph Smith first saw the Father and the Son.

“We solemnly proclaim that God loves His children in every nation of the world. God the Father has given us the divine birth, the incomparable life, and the infinite atoning sacrifice of His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. By the power of the Father, Jesus rose again and gained the victory over death. He is our Savior, our Exemplar, and our Redeemer.

“Two hundred years ago, on a beautiful spring morning in 1820, young Joseph Smith, seeking to know which church to join, went into the woods to pray near his home in upstate New York, USA. He had questions regarding the salvation of his soul and trusted that God would direct him.

“In humility, we declare that in answer to his prayer, God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph and inaugurated the ‘restitution of all things’ (Acts 3:21) as foretold in the Bible. In this vision, he learned that following the death of the original Apostles, Christ’s New Testament Church was lost from the earth. Joseph would be instrumental in its return.

“We affirm that under the direction of the Father and the Son, heavenly messengers came to instruct Joseph and reestablish the Church of Jesus Christ. The resurrected John the Baptist restored the authority to baptize by immersion for the remission of sins. Three of the original twelve Apostles—Peter, James, and John—restored the apostleship and keys of priesthood authority. Others came as well, including Elijah, who restored the authority to join families together forever in eternal relationships that transcend death.

“We further witness that Joseph Smith was given the gift and power of God to translate an ancient record: the Book of Mormon—Another Testament of Jesus Christ. Pages of this sacred text include an account of the personal ministry of Jesus Christ among people in the Western Hemisphere soon after His Resurrection. It teaches of life’s purpose and explains the doctrine of Christ, which is central to that purpose. As a companion scripture to the Bible, the Book of Mormon testifies that all human beings are sons and daughters of a loving Father in Heaven, that He has a divine plan for our lives, and that His Son, Jesus Christ, speaks today as well as in days of old.

“We declare that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, organized on April 6, 1830, is Christ’s New Testament Church restored. This Church is anchored in the perfect life of its chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ, and in His infinite Atonement and literal Resurrection. Jesus Christ has once again called Apostles and has given them priesthood authority. He invites all of us to come unto Him and His Church, to receive the Holy Ghost, the ordinances of salvation, and to gain enduring joy.

“Two hundred years have now elapsed since this Restoration was initiated by God the Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Millions throughout the world have embraced a knowledge of these prophesied events.

“We gladly declare that the promised Restoration goes forward through continuing revelation. The earth will never again be the same, as God will ‘gather together in one all things in Christ’ (Ephesians 1:10).

“With reverence and gratitude, we as His Apostles invite all to know—as we do—that the heavens are open. We affirm that God is making known His will for His beloved sons and daughters. We testify that those who prayerfully study the message of the Restoration and act in faith will be blessed to gain their own witness of its divinity and of its purpose to prepare the world for the promised Second Coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

Beloved brothers and sisters, that is our bicentennial proclamation to the world regarding the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness. It has been translated into 12 languages. Other languages will soon follow. It will be available immediately on the Church website, from which you may obtain a copy. Study it privately and with your family members and friends. Ponder the truths and think of the impact those truths will have on your life if you will hear them, hearken to them, and heed the commandments and covenants that accompany them.

I know that Joseph Smith is the foreordained prophet whom the Lord chose to open this last dispensation. Through him the Lord’s Church was restored to the earth. Joseph sealed his testimony with his blood. How I love and honor him!

God lives! Jesus is the Christ! His Church has been restored! He and His Father, our Heavenly Father, are watching over us. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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1. Doctrine and Covenants 121:27.
 2. 1 Nephi 14:14.
 3. Doctrine and Covenants 121:28.
 4. See 1 Nephi 22:23.
 5. Ether 12:5.
 6. See Doctrine and Covenants 123:12.
 7. See Isaiah 5:20; 2 Nephi 15:20.
 8. See 2 Nephi 25:4; Alma 5:43.
 9. Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35.
 10. 3 Nephi 11:7.
 11. Joseph Smith—History 1:17.
 12. See Doctrine and Covenants 1:1.
 13. In the Old Testament, the word *hearken* is translated from the Hebrew *shama*, which is a strong verb that means to “listen with the intent to obey.” *Hearken* is a scriptural word that occurs in 40 sections of the Doctrine and Covenants.
 14. See 2 Corinthians 3:3.

Hosanna Shout

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2020 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

Now, my dear brothers and sisters, as we commemorate Joseph Smith's First Vision of the Father and the Son, we felt that it would be appropriate to rejoice together by participating in the Hosanna Shout.

This sacred shout was first given in this dispensation at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple on March 27, 1836. It is now given at the dedication of each temple. It is a sacred tribute to the Father and the Son, symbolizing the reaction of the multitude when the Savior made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. It also reaffirms what young Joseph experienced that day in the Sacred Grove—namely, that the Father and the Son are two glorified Beings, whom we worship and praise.

I will now demonstrate how the Hosanna Shout is given. As I do, I invite our colleagues in the media to treat this very sacred observance with dignity and respect.

Each one participating takes a clean white handkerchief, holding it by one corner, and waves it while saying in unison, "Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna to God and the Lamb," repeated three times, followed by "Amen, Amen, and Amen." If you do not have a white handkerchief, you may simply wave your hand.

Brothers and sisters, I now invite you to stand and participate in the Hosanna Shout, following which the "Hosanna Anthem" and "The Spirit of God"¹ will be sung.

Upon a signal from the conductor, please join in singing "The Spirit of God."

Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna to God and the Lamb.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna to God and the Lamb.
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna to God and the Lamb.
Amen, Amen, and Amen.

1. Hymns, no. 2.

Go Forward in Faith

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2020 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

I bless you with peace and increasing faith in the Lord.

My beloved brothers and sisters, as we come to the end of this historic conference, we express our gratitude to the Lord. The music has been sublime and the messages inspiring.

During this conference, we have experienced many highlights. On this bicentennial anniversary, we have introduced a proclamation to the world declaring the reality of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness.

We commemorated the Restoration with the Hosanna Shout.

We unveiled a new symbol signifying our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and for visual recognition of official Church information and materials.

We have called for a global day of fasting and prayer, that the present pandemic may be controlled, caregivers protected, the economy strengthened, and life normalized. This fast will be held on Good Friday, April 10. What a great Friday that will be!

Next Sunday is Easter Sunday, when we will again commemorate the Atonement and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of His Atonement, His gift of resurrection will come to all who have ever lived. And His gift of eternal life will come to all who qualify by fidelity to ordinances and covenants made in His holy temples.

The many inspiring components of this April 2020 general conference—and the sacred week that we now begin—can be summarized by two divinely decreed words: “Hear Him.”¹ We pray that your focus on Heavenly Father, who spoke those words, and on His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, will loom largest in your memories of all that has transpired. We pray that you will begin anew *truly* to hear, hearken to, and heed the words of the Savior.² I promise that decreased fear and increased faith will follow.

Thank you for your desire to make your homes true sanctuaries of faith, where the Spirit of the Lord may dwell. Our gospel study curriculum, *Come, Follow Me*, will continue to bless your lives. Your consistent efforts in this endeavor—even during those moments when you feel that you are not being particularly successful—will change your life, that of your family, and the world. We will be strengthened as we become even more valiant disciples of the Lord, standing up and speaking up for Him, wherever we are.

Now, let's talk about temples. We have 168 dedicated temples across the world. Others are at various stages of planning and construction. When plans are announced to erect a new temple, it becomes part of our sacred history.

It may seem odd to announce new temples when all our temples are closed for a while.

More than a century ago, President Wilford Woodruff foresaw conditions such as ours today, as recorded in his dedicatory prayer of the Salt Lake Temple, given in 1893. Some of you may have recently seen excerpts from this remarkable prayer on social media.

Hear these pleadings from a mighty prophet of God: "When Thy people shall *not* have the opportunity of entering this holy house ... and they are oppressed and in trouble, surrounded by difficulties ... and shall turn their faces towards this Thy holy house and ask Thee for deliverance, for help, for Thy power to be extended in their behalf, we beseech Thee, to look down from Thy holy habitation in mercy ... and listen to their cries. Or when the children of Thy people, in years to come, shall be separated, through any cause, from this place, ... and they shall cry unto Thee from the depths of their affliction and sorrow to extend relief and deliverance to them, we humbly entreat Thee to ... hearken to their cries, and grant unto them the blessings for which they ask."³

Brothers and sisters, during times of *our* distress when temples *are* closed, you can still draw upon the power of your temple covenants and endowment as you honor your covenants. Please use this time when temples are closed to continue to live a temple-worthy life or to become temple worthy.

Talk about the temple with your family and friends. Because Jesus Christ is at the center of everything we do in the temple, as you think more about the temple you will be thinking more about Him. Study and pray to learn more about the power and knowledge with which you have been endowed—or with which you will yet be endowed.

Today we are pleased to announce plans to construct eight new temples in the following locations: Bahía Blanca, Argentina; Tallahassee, Florida; Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Benin City, Nigeria; Syracuse, Utah; Dubai, United Arab Emirates; and Shanghai, People's Republic of China.

In all eight locations, Church architects will work with local officials so that the temple will harmonize with and be a beautiful addition to each community.

The plan for a temple in Dubai comes in response to their gracious invitation, which we gratefully acknowledge.

Context for the plan for Shanghai is very important. For more than two decades, temple-worthy members in the People's Republic of China have attended the Hong Kong China Temple. But in July 2019, that temple was closed for long-planned and much-needed renovation.

In Shanghai, a modest multipurpose meeting place will provide a way for Chinese members to continue to participate in ordinances of the temple—in the People's Republic of China—for them and their ancestors.⁴

In every country, this Church teaches its members to honor, obey, and sustain the law.⁵ We teach the importance of the family, of being good parents and exemplary citizens. Because we respect the laws and regulations of the People's Republic of China, the Church does *not* send proselyting missionaries there; nor will we do so now.

Expatriate and Chinese congregations will continue to meet separately. The Church's legal status there remains *unchanged*. In an initial phase of facility use, entry will be by appointment only. The house of the Lord in Shanghai will *not* be a destination place for tourists from other countries.

These eight new temples will bless the lives of many people on both sides of the veil of death. Temples are a crowning part of the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In God's goodness and generosity, He is bringing the blessings of the temple closer to His children *everywhere*.

As the Restoration continues, I know that God will continue to reveal many great and important things pertaining to His kingdom here on earth.⁶ That kingdom *is* The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Dear brothers and sisters, I express my love for you. During this time of tension and uncertainty, and invoking the authority vested in me, I would like to confer upon you an apostolic blessing.

I bless you with peace and increasing faith in the Lord.⁷

I bless you with a desire to repent and become a little more like Him each day.⁸

I bless you to know that the Prophet Joseph Smith is the prophet of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness.

Should there be illness among you or your loved ones, I leave a blessing of healing, consistent with the will of the Lord.

I so bless you, adding once more my expression of love for each of you, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Joseph Smith—History 1:17; see also Luke 9:35.

2. See John 10:27; Revelation 3:20; Mosiah 26:21, 28; Doctrine and Covenants 29:7.

3. Wilford Woodruff, dedicatory prayer of the Salt Lake Temple, Apr. 6, 1893, ChurchofJesusChrist.org; emphasis added.

4. For thousands of years, the Chinese people have kept clan histories and genealogies. Traditional Chinese ceremonies show respect for their ancestors, such as the Qingming Festival (清明节). This year's Qingming Festival (清明节) was calendared for April 4–5.

5. See Articles of Faith 1:12.

6. See Articles of Faith 1:9.

7. See John 14:27.

8. See 3 Nephi 27:27.

Moving Forward

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2020 | Saturday morning session | [Link](#)

The work of the Lord is steadily moving forward.

My dear brothers and sisters, what a joy it is to be with you as we begin the 190th Semiannual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I love joining with you in your homes or wherever you are to listen together to the messages of prophets, seers, and revelators and other Church leaders.

How grateful we are for the technology that allows us to be connected as one great worldwide gathering of disciples of Jesus Christ. General conference last April was viewed by more people than any preceding it, and we have every expectation that will happen again.

During the past few months, a global pandemic, raging wildfires, and other natural disasters have turned our world upside down. I grieve with each of you who has lost a loved one during this time. And I pray for all who are currently suffering.

Meanwhile, the work of the Lord is steadily moving forward. Amid social distancing, face masks, and Zoom meetings, we have learned to do some things differently and some even more effectively. Unusual times can bring unusual rewards.

Our missionaries and mission leaders have been resourceful, resilient, and truly remarkable. Although most missionaries have had to find new, creative ways to do their work, many missions have reported doing *more* teaching than ever.

We had to close temples for a time, and some construction projects were briefly delayed, but now they are all moving forward. In the calendar year 2020, we will have broken ground for 20 new temples!

Family history work has increased exponentially. Many new wards and stakes have been created. And we are gratified to report that the Church has provided pandemic humanitarian aid for 895 projects in 150 countries.

Increased gospel study in many homes is resulting in stronger testimonies and family relationships. One mother wrote: “We feel much closer to our children and grandchildren now that we gather on Zoom every Sunday. Each takes a turn giving their thoughts on Come, Follow Me. Prayers for our family members have changed because we better understand what they need.”

I pray that we as a people are using this unique time to grow spiritually. We are here on earth to be tested, to see if we will choose to follow Jesus Christ, to repent regularly, to learn, and to progress. Our spirits long to progress. And we do that best by staying firmly on the covenant path.

Through it all, our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, love us! They care for us! They and Their holy angels are watching over us.¹ I know that is true.

As we gather to hear the words the Lord has inspired His servants to deliver, I invite you to ponder a promise the Lord made. He declared that “*whosoever will* may lay hold upon the word of God, which is quick and powerful, which shall divide asunder all the cunning ... and the wiles of the devil, and lead the [disciple] of Christ in a strait and narrow course.”²

I pray that you will *choose* to lay hold upon the word of God as it is declared during this general conference. And I pray that you may feel the Lord’s perfect love for you,³ in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:88.

2. Helaman 3:29; emphasis added.

3. See 2 Nephi 1:15.

Embrace the Future with Faith

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2020 | Women's session | [Link](#)

The future will be glorious for those who are prepared and who continue to prepare to be instruments in the Lord's hands.

This has been an unforgettable evening. My dear sisters, I am honored to be with you. You have been on my mind so often during these past few months. You are more than eight million strong. You have not only the *numbers* but the *spiritual power* to change the world. I have watched you doing just that during this pandemic.

Some of you suddenly found yourselves searching for scarce supplies or a new job. Many tutored children and checked on neighbors. Some welcomed missionaries home earlier than expected, while others transformed your homes into missionary training centers. You have used technology to connect with family and friends, to minister to those who have felt isolated, and to study Come, Follow Me with others. You have found new ways to make the Sabbath a delight. And you have made protective masks—millions of them!

With heartfelt compassion and love, my heart goes out to the many women around the world whose loved ones have died. We weep with you. And we pray for you. We praise and pray for all who work tirelessly to safeguard the health of others.

You young women have also been remarkable. Though social media has been flooded with contention, many of you have found ways to encourage others and share our Savior's light.

Sisters, you have all been absolutely heroic! I marvel at your strength and your faith. You have shown that in difficult circumstances, you bravely carry on. I love you, and I assure you that the Lord loves you and sees the great work you are performing. Thank you! Once again, you have proven that you are literally the hope of Israel!

You embody the hopes that President Gordon B. Hinckley had for you when he introduced "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" 25 years ago in the September 1995 general Relief Society meeting.¹ It is significant that he chose to introduce this

important proclamation to the sisters of the Church. By doing so, President Hinckley underscored the irreplaceable influence of women in the Lord's plan.

Now, I would love to know what you have learned this year. Have you grown closer to the Lord, or do you feel further away from Him? And how have current events made you feel about the future?

Admittedly, the Lord has spoken of our day in sobering terms. He warned that in our day "men's hearts [would fail] them"² and that even the very elect would be at risk of being deceived.³ He told the Prophet Joseph Smith that "peace [would] be taken from the earth"⁴ and calamities would befall mankind.⁵

Yet the Lord has also provided a vision of how remarkable this dispensation is. He inspired the Prophet Joseph Smith to declare that "the work of ... these last days, is one of vast magnitude. ... Its glories are past description, and its grandeur unsurpassable."⁶

Now, *grandeur* may not be the word you would choose to describe these past few months! How *are* we to deal with both the somber prophecies and the glorious pronouncements about our day? The Lord told us how with simple, but stunning, reassurance: "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear."⁷

What a promise! It is one that can literally change the way we see our future. I recently heard a woman of deep testimony admit that the pandemic, combined with an earthquake in the Salt Lake Valley, had helped her realize she was not as prepared as she thought she was. When I asked whether she was referring to her food storage *or* her testimony, she smiled and said, "Yes!"

If preparation is our key to embracing this dispensation and our future with faith, how can we best prepare?

For decades, the Lord's prophets have urged us to store food, water, and financial reserves for a time of need. The current pandemic has reinforced the wisdom of that counsel. I urge you to take steps to be temporally prepared. But I am even more concerned about your spiritual and emotional preparation.

In that regard, we can learn a lot from Captain Moroni. As commander of the Nephite armies, he faced opposing forces that were stronger, greater in number, and meaner. So, Moroni prepared his people in three essential ways.

First, he helped them create areas where they would be safe—"places of security" he called them.⁸ **Second**, he prepared "the minds of the people to be faithful unto the

Lord.”⁹ And **third**, he never stopped preparing his people—physically or spiritually.¹⁰ Let us consider these three principles.

Principle Number One: Create Places of Security

Moroni fortified every Nephite city with embankments, forts, and walls.¹¹ When the Lamanites came against them, they “were astonished exceedingly, because of the wisdom of the Nephites in preparing *their places of security*.”¹²

Similarly, as turmoil rages around *us*, we need to create places where *we* are safe, both physically and spiritually. When your home becomes a personal sanctuary of faith—where the Spirit resides—your home becomes the first line of defense.

Likewise, the stakes of Zion are “a refuge from the storm”¹³ because they are led by those who hold priesthood keys and exercise priesthood authority. As you continue to follow the counsel of those whom the Lord has authorized to guide you, you will feel greater safety.

The temple—the house of the Lord—is a place of security unlike any other. There, you sisters are endowed with priesthood power through the sacred priesthood covenants you make.¹⁴ There, your families are sealed for eternity. Even this year, when access to our temples has been seriously limited, your endowment has given you constant access to God’s power as you have honored your covenants with Him.

Simply said, a place of security is *anywhere* you can feel the presence of the Holy Ghost and be guided by Him.¹⁵ When the Holy Ghost is with you, you can teach truth, even when it runs counter to prevailing opinions. And you can ponder sincere questions about the gospel in an environment of revelation.

I invite you, my dear sisters, to create a home that is a place of security. And I renew my invitation for you to increase your understanding of priesthood power and of temple covenants and blessings. Having places of security to which you can retreat will help you embrace the future with faith.

Principle Number Two: Prepare Your Mind to Be Faithful to God

We have undertaken a major project to extend the life and capacity of the Salt Lake Temple.

Some questioned the need for taking such extraordinary measures. However, when the Salt Lake Valley suffered a 5.7-magnitude earthquake earlier this year, this venerable temple shook hard enough that the trumpet on the statue of the angel Moroni fell!¹⁶

Just as the physical foundation of the Salt Lake Temple must be strong enough to withstand natural disasters, our *spiritual* foundations must be solid. Then, when metaphorical earthquakes rock our lives, we can stand “steadfast and immovable” because of our faith.¹⁷

The Lord taught us how to increase our faith by seeking “*learning*, even by study and also by faith.”¹⁸ We strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ as we strive to keep His commandments and “always remember him.”¹⁹ Further, our faith increases every time we *exercise* our faith in Him. That is what learning by faith means.

For example, each time we have the faith to be obedient to God’s laws—even when popular opinions belittle us—or each time we resist entertainment or ideologies that celebrate covenant-breaking, we are *exercising* our faith, which in turn *increases* our faith.

Further, few things build faith more than does regular immersion in the Book of Mormon. No other book testifies of Jesus Christ with such power and clarity. Its prophets, as inspired by the Lord, saw our day and selected the doctrine and truths that would help *us* most. The Book of Mormon *is* our *latter-day* survival guide.

Of course, our ultimate security comes as we yoke ourselves to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ! Life *without* God is a life filled with fear. Life *with* God is a life filled with peace. This is because spiritual blessings come to the faithful. Receiving personal revelation is one of the greatest of those blessings.

The Lord has promised that if we will ask, we may receive “revelation upon revelation.”²⁰ I promise that as you increase your capacity to receive revelation, the Lord will bless you with increased direction for your life and with boundless gifts of the Spirit.

Principle Number Three: Never Stop Preparing

Even when things went *well*, Captain Moroni continued to prepare his people. He never stopped. He *never* became complacent.

The adversary never stops attacking. So, we can *never* stop preparing! The more self-reliant we are—temporally, emotionally, and spiritually—the more prepared we are to thwart Satan’s relentless assaults.

Dear sisters, you are adept at creating places of security for yourselves and those you love. Further, you have a divine endowment that enables you to build faith in others in compelling ways.²¹ And *you* never stop. You have demonstrated that once again this year.

Please, keep going! Your vigilance in safeguarding your homes and instilling faith in the hearts of your loved ones will reap rewards for generations to come.

My dear sisters, we have *so much* to look forward to! The Lord placed you here now because He knew you had the capacity to negotiate the complexities of the latter part of these latter days. He knew you would grasp the grandeur of His work and be eager to help bring it to pass.

I am not saying that the days ahead will be easy, but I promise you that the future will be glorious for those who are prepared and who continue to prepare to be instruments in the Lord's hands.

My dear sisters, let us not just *endure* this current season. Let us *embrace the future with faith*! Turbulent times are opportunities for us to thrive spiritually. They are times when our influence can be much more penetrating than in calmer times.

I promise that as we create places of security, prepare our minds to be faithful to God, and never stop preparing, God will bless us. He will “deliver us; yea, insomuch that he [will] speak peace to our souls, and [will] grant unto us great faith, and ... cause us that we [can] hope for our deliverance in him.”²²

As you prepare to embrace the future with faith, these promises *will* be yours! I so testify, with my expression of love *for* you and my confidence *in* you, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” ChurchofJesusChrist.org. In the address that accompanied this proclamation, President Gordon B. Hinckley said to the sisters: “I am grateful for the strength that you have and for your loyalty, your faith, your love. I am thankful for the resolution which you carry in your hearts to walk in faith, to keep the commandments, to do what is right at all times and in all circumstances” (“Stand Strong against the Wiles of the World,” Ensign, Nov. 1995, 98–99).

2. Luke 21:26; see also Doctrine and Covenants 45:26.

3. See Matthew 24:24; Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22.

4. Doctrine and Covenants 1:35.

5. See Doctrine and Covenants 1:17. The Apostle Paul prophesied that “in the last days perilous times [would] come.” That would make our day spiritually treacherous. (See 2 Timothy 3:1–5.)

6. Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (2007), 512.

7. Doctrine and Covenants 38:30.

8. See Alma 49:5; 50:4.

9. Alma 48:7.

10. See Alma 49–50.
11. See Alma 48:8.
12. Alma 49:5; emphasis added.
13. Doctrine and Covenants 115:6.
14. See Russell M. Nelson, “Spiritual Treasures,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2019, 76–79.
15. Eliza R. Snow taught that the Holy Ghost “satisfies and fills up every longing of the human heart. ... When I am filled with that Spirit, my soul is satisfied, and I can say in good earnest, that the trifling things of the day do not seem to stand in my way at all. ... Is it not our privilege to so live that we can have this constantly flowing into our souls?” (in *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* [2011], 46).
16. See Daniel Burke, “Utah Earthquake Damages Mormon Temple and Knocks Trumpet from Iconic Angel Statue,” Mar. 18, 2020, [cnn.com](https://www.cnn.com).
17. Mosiah 5:15.
18. Doctrine and Covenants 88:118; emphasis added.
19. Moroni 4:3.
20. Doctrine and Covenants 42:61.
21. The Apostle Paul signaled this reality when he attributed Timothy’s unfeigned faith to his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother Lois (see 2 Timothy 1:5).
22. Alma 58:11.

Let God Prevail

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

Oct 2020 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

Are you willing to let God prevail in your life? Are you willing to let God be the most important influence in your life?

My dear brothers and sisters, how grateful I am for the marvelous messages of this conference and for my privilege to speak with you now.

For the more than 36 years I've been an Apostle, the doctrine of the gathering of Israel has captured my attention.¹ *Everything* about it has intrigued me, including the ministries and names² of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; their lives and their wives; the covenant God made with them and extended through their lineage;³ the dispersion of the twelve tribes; and the numerous prophecies about the gathering in our day.

I have studied the gathering, prayed about it, feasted upon every related scripture, and asked the Lord to increase my understanding.

So imagine my delight when I was led recently to a new insight. With the help of two Hebrew scholars, I learned that one of the Hebraic meanings of the word *Israel* is “let God prevail.”⁴ Thus the very name of *Israel* refers to a person who is *willing* to let God prevail in his or her life. That concept stirs my soul!

The word *willing* is crucial to this interpretation of *Israel*.⁵ We all have our agency. We can choose to be of Israel, or not. We can choose to let God prevail in our lives, or not. We can choose to let God be the most powerful influence in our lives, or not.

For a moment, let us recall a crucial turning point in the life of Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. At the place Jacob named *Peniel* (which means “the face of God”),⁶ Jacob wrestled with a serious challenge. His agency was tested. Through this wrestle, Jacob proved what was most important to him. He demonstrated that he was willing to let God prevail in his life. In response, God changed Jacob's name to *Israel*,⁷ meaning “let God prevail.” God then promised Israel that *all* the blessings that had been pronounced upon Abraham's head would also be his.⁸

Sadly, Israel's posterity broke their covenants with God. They stoned the prophets and were *not* willing to let God prevail in their lives. Subsequently, God scattered them to the four corners of the earth.⁹ Mercifully, He later promised to gather them, as reported by Isaiah: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee [Israel]; but with great mercies will I gather thee."¹⁰

With the Hebraic definition of *Israel* in mind, we find that the gathering of Israel takes on added meaning. The Lord is gathering those who are willing to let God prevail in their lives. The Lord is gathering those who will choose to let God be the most important influence in their lives.

For centuries, prophets have foretold this gathering,¹¹ and it is happening right now! As an essential prelude to the Second Coming of the Lord, it is *the most* important work in the world!

This premillennial gathering is an individual saga of expanding faith and spiritual courage for millions of people. And as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or "latter-day covenant Israel,"¹² we have been charged to assist the Lord with this pivotal work.¹³

When we speak of gathering Israel on both sides of the veil, we are referring, of course, to missionary, temple, and family history work. We are also referring to building faith and testimony in the hearts of those with whom we live, work, and serve. Anytime we do anything that helps anyone—on either side of the veil—to make and keep their covenants with God, we are helping to gather Israel.

Not long ago, the wife of one of our grandsons was struggling spiritually. I will call her "Jill." Despite fasting, prayer, and priesthood blessings, Jill's father was dying. She was gripped with fear that she would lose both her dad and her testimony.

Late one evening, my wife, Sister Wendy Nelson, told me of Jill's situation. The next morning Wendy felt impressed to share with Jill that my response to her spiritual wrestle was one word! The word was *myopic*.

Jill later admitted to Wendy that initially she was devastated by my response. She said, "I was hoping for Grandfather to promise me a miracle for my dad. I kept wondering why the word *myopic* was the one he felt compelled to say."

After Jill's father passed on, the word *myopic* kept coming to her mind. She opened her heart to understand even more deeply that *myopic* meant "nearsighted." And her thinking began to shift. Jill then said, "*Myopic* caused me to stop, think, and heal. That

word now fills me with peace. It reminds me to expand my perspective and seek the eternal. It reminds me that there is a divine plan and that my dad still lives and loves and looks out for me. *Myopic* has led me to God."

I am very proud of our precious granddaughter-in-law. During this heart-wrenching time in her life, dear Jill is learning to embrace God's will for her dad, with an eternal perspective for her own life. By *choosing* to let God prevail, she is finding peace.

If we will allow it, there are many ways this Hebraic interpretation of *Israel* can help us. Imagine how our prayers for our missionaries—and for our own efforts to gather Israel—could change with this concept in mind. We often pray that we and the missionaries will be led to those who are prepared to receive the truths of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. I wonder, to whom will we be led when we plead to find those who are willing to let God prevail in their lives?

We may be led to some who have never believed in God or Jesus Christ but who are now yearning to learn about Them and Their plan of happiness. Others may have been "born in the covenant"¹⁴ but have since wandered away from the covenant path. They may now be ready to repent, return, and let God prevail. We can assist them by welcoming them with open arms and hearts. And some to whom we may be led may have always felt there was something missing in their lives. They too are longing for the wholeness and joy that come to those who are willing to let God prevail in their lives.

The gospel net to gather scattered Israel is expansive. There is room for each person who will fully embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ. Each convert becomes one of God's covenant children,¹⁵ whether by birth or by adoption. Each becomes a full heir to all that God has promised the faithful children of Israel!¹⁶

Each of us has a divine potential because each is a child of God. Each is equal in His eyes. The implications of this truth are profound. Brothers and sisters, please listen carefully to what I am about to say. God does not love one race more than another. His doctrine on this matter is clear. He invites *all* to come unto Him, "black and white, bond and free, male and female."¹⁷

I assure you that your standing before God is not determined by the color of your skin. Favor or disfavor with God is dependent upon your devotion to God and His commandments and not the color of your skin.

I grieve that our Black brothers and sisters the world over are enduring the pains of racism and prejudice. Today I call upon our members everywhere to lead out in

abandoning attitudes and actions of prejudice. I plead with you to promote respect for all of God's children.

The question for each of us, regardless of race, is the same. Are *you* willing to let God prevail in your life? Are *you* willing to let God be the most important influence in your life? Will you allow His words, His commandments, and His covenants to influence what you do each day? Will you allow His voice to take priority over any other? Are you *willing* to let whatever He needs you to do take precedence over every other ambition? Are you *willing* to have your will swallowed up in His?^{[18](#)}

Consider how such willingness could bless you. If you are unmarried and seeking an eternal companion, your desire to be "of Israel" will help you decide whom to date and how.

If you are married to a companion who has broken his or her covenants, your willingness to let God prevail in your life will allow your covenants with God to remain intact. The Savior will heal your broken heart. The heavens will open as you seek to know how to move forward. You do not need to wander or wonder.

If you have sincere questions about the gospel or the Church, as you choose to let God prevail, you will be led to find and understand the absolute, eternal truths that will guide your life and help you stay firmly on the covenant path.

When you are faced with temptation—even if the temptation comes when you are exhausted or feeling alone or misunderstood—imagine the courage you can muster as you choose to let God prevail in your life and as you plead with Him to strengthen you.

When your greatest desire is to let God prevail, to be part of Israel, so many decisions become easier. So many issues become nonissues! You know how best to groom yourself. You know what to watch and read, where to spend your time, and with whom to associate. You know what you want to accomplish. You know the kind of person you really want to become.

Now, my dear brothers and sisters, it takes both faith and courage to let God prevail. It takes persistent, rigorous spiritual work to repent and to put off the natural man through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.^{[19](#)} It takes consistent, daily effort to develop personal habits to study the gospel, to learn more about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, and to seek and respond to personal revelation.

During these perilous times of which the Apostle Paul prophesied,²⁰ Satan is no longer even *trying* to hide his attacks on God's plan. Emboldened evil abounds. Therefore, the only way to survive spiritually is to be determined to let God prevail in our lives, to learn to hear His voice, and to use our energy to help gather Israel.

Now, how does the Lord *feel* about people who will let God prevail? Nephi summed it up well: "[The Lord] *loveth* those who will have him to be their God. Behold, he loved our fathers, and he covenanted with them, yea, even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and he remember[s] the covenants which he [has] made."²¹

And what is the Lord willing to *do* for Israel? The Lord has pledged that He will "fight [our] battles, and [our] children's battles, and our children's children's [battles] ... to the third and fourth generation!"²²

As you study your scriptures during the next six months, I encourage you to make a list of all that the Lord has promised He will do for covenant Israel. I think you will be astounded! Ponder these promises. Talk about them with your family and friends. Then live and watch for these promises to be fulfilled in your own life.

My dear brothers and sisters, as you choose to let God prevail in your lives, you will experience for yourselves that our God is "a God of miracles."²³ As a people, we are His covenant children, and we will be called by His name. Of this I testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. I have spoken of Israel in at least 378 of the more than 800 messages I have delivered during my 36 years as an Apostle.

2. In Hebrew, *Abram* is a noble name meaning "exalted father." But when God changed that name to *Abraham*, the name took on even greater significance, meaning "father of a multitude." Indeed, Abraham was to be the "father of many nations." (See Genesis 17:5; Nehemiah 9:7.)

3. The Lord God Jehovah made a covenant with Abraham that the Savior of the world would be born through Abraham's seed, certain lands would be inherited, and all nations would be blessed through Abraham's lineage (see Bible Dictionary, "Abraham, covenant of").

4. See Bible Dictionary, "Israel."

5. The word *Israel* appears more than a thousand times in the scriptures. It can apply to Jacob's (Israel's) family of 12 sons, plus daughters (see Genesis 35:23–26; 46:7). Today it can apply geographically as a place on planet Earth. But its doctrinal use applies to people who are willing to let God prevail in their lives.

6. See Genesis 32:30; also spelled as *Penuel* in Genesis 32:31.

7. See Genesis 32:28.

8. See Genesis 35:11–12.

9. For further study, see Topical Guide, "Israel, Scattering of."
10. Isaiah 54:7.
11. See Isaiah 11:11–12; 2 Nephi 21:11–12; Mosiah 15:11.
12. See Encyclopedia of Mormonism (1992), "Covenant Israel, Latter-Day," 1:330–31.
13. As we participate in the gathering of Israel, the Lord has a wonderful way of describing those being gathered. He refers to us collectively as His "peculiar treasure" (Exodus 19:5; Psalm 135:4), as His "jewels" (Malachi 3:17; Doctrine and Covenants 101:3), and as a "holy nation" (Exodus 19:6; see also Deuteronomy 14:2; 26:18).
14. This phrase refers to the very covenant that God made with Abraham, saying, "In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (3 Nephi 20:27). "Born in the covenant" means that before a person was born, that person's mother and father were sealed in the temple.
15. Such a promise was taught by God to Abraham: "As many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father" (Abraham 2:10; see also Romans 8:14–17; Galatians 3:26–29).
16. Each faithful member may request a patriarchal blessing. Through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the patriarch declares that person's lineage in the house of Israel. That declaration is not necessarily a pronouncement of his or her race, nationality, or genetic makeup. Rather, the declared lineage identifies the tribe of Israel through which that individual will receive his or her blessings.
17. 2 Nephi 26:33.
18. See Mosiah 15:7. Being of Israel is not for the faint of heart. To receive all the blessings that God has in store for Abraham's seed, we can each expect to be given our own unique "Abrahamic test." God will test us, as the Prophet Joseph Smith taught, by wrenching our very heartstrings. (See recollection of John Taylor in Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 231.)
19. See Mosiah 3:19.
20. See 2 Timothy 3:1–13.
21. 1 Nephi 17:40; emphasis added.
22. Doctrine and Covenants 98:37; see also Psalm 31:23; Isaiah 49:25; Doctrine and Covenants 105:14.
23. Mormon 9:11.

A New Normal

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

Oct 2020 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

I invite you to turn your heart, mind, and soul increasingly to our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

My dear brothers and sisters, these two days of general conference have been glorious! I agree with Elder Jeffrey R. Holland. As he mentioned, the messages, the prayers, and the music have all been inspired by the Lord. I am grateful to all who have participated in any way.

Throughout the proceedings, I have pictured you in my mind listening to conference. I have asked the Lord to help me understand what you are feeling, worrying about, or trying to resolve. I have wondered what I might say to conclude this conference that would send you forth with the optimism about the future that I know the Lord wants you to feel.

We live in a glorious age, foreseen by prophets for centuries. This is the dispensation when no spiritual blessing will be withheld from the righteous.¹ Despite the world's commotion,² the Lord would have us look forward to the future "with joyful anticipation."³ Let us not spin our wheels in the memories of yesterday. The gathering of Israel moves forward. The Lord Jesus Christ directs the affairs of His Church, and it will achieve its divine objectives.

The challenge for you and me is to make certain that each of us will achieve his or her divine potential. Today we often hear about "a new normal." If you really want to embrace a new normal, I invite you to turn your heart, mind, and soul increasingly to our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Let that be your new normal.

Embrace your new normal by repenting daily. Seek to be increasingly pure in thought, word, and deed. Minister to others. Keep an eternal perspective. Magnify your callings. And whatever your challenges, my dear brothers and sisters, live each day so that you are more prepared to meet your Maker.⁴

That is why we have temples. The Lord's ordinances and covenants prepare us for eternal life, the greatest of all of God's blessings.⁵ As you know, the COVID pandemic required a temporary closure of our temples. Then we commenced a carefully coordinated, phased reopening. With phase 2 now in place in many temples, thousands of couples have been sealed and thousands have received their own endowments just in the past few months. We look forward to the day when all worthy members of the Church can again serve their ancestors and worship in a holy temple.

Now I am pleased to announce plans for the construction of six new temples to be built in the following locations: Tarawa, Kiribati; Port Vila, Vanuatu; Lindon, Utah; Greater Guatemala City, Guatemala; São Paulo East, Brazil; and Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

As we build and maintain these temples, we pray that each of you will build and maintain yourself so you can be worthy to enter the holy temple.

Now, my dear brothers and sisters, I bless you to be filled with the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ. His peace is beyond all mortal understanding.⁶ I bless you with an increased desire and ability to obey the laws of God. I promise that as you do, you will be showered with blessings, including greater courage, increased personal revelation, sweeter harmony in your homes, and joy even amid uncertainty.

May we go forward together to fulfill our divine mandate—that of preparing ourselves and the world for the Second Coming of the Lord. I so pray, with my expression of love for you, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 121:26–29.

2. See Doctrine and Covenants 45:26; 88:91.

3. Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (2007), 513.

4. See Alma 12:24; 34:32.

5. See Doctrine and Covenants 14:7.

6. See Philippians 4:7.

Welcome Message

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2021 | Saturday morning session | [Link](#)

Welcome to general conference and to the privilege of hearing the voice of the Lord.

My dear brothers and sisters and friends throughout the world, I offer my personal welcome to this general conference. We gather as a great global family desiring to worship our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Thank you for joining with us.

This last year has been one for the record books. No doubt we have each learned things we did not know previously. Some lessons that I knew before have been written on my heart in new and instructive ways.

For example, I know for sure that the Lord directs the affairs of His Church. He said, “I will show [you] that I am able to do mine own work.”¹

Often, my counselors and I have watched through tear-brimmed eyes as He has interceded in extremely challenging circumstances after we had done our best and could do no more. We do indeed stand all amazed.

I also understand better now what He meant when He said, “Behold, I will hasten my work in its time.”² Over and over again I have rejoiced as He has directed and executed the hastening of His work—even during a global pandemic.

My dear brothers and sisters, the strength of the Church lies in the efforts and ever-growing testimonies of its members. Testimonies are best cultivated in the home. During this past year, many of you have dramatically increased the study of the gospel in your homes. I thank you, and your children will thank you.

The huge project to renovate the Salt Lake Temple continues. From my office I have a front-row seat to watch the work taking place on the temple plaza.

As I have watched workers dig out old tree roots, plumbing, wiring, and a leaky fountain, I have thought about the need for each of us to remove, with the Savior’s help, the old debris in our lives.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of repentance.³ Because of the Savior’s Atonement, His gospel provides an invitation to keep changing, growing, and becoming

more pure. It is a gospel of hope, of healing, and of progress. Thus, the gospel is a message of joy! Our spirits rejoice with every small step forward we take.

Part of the gathering of Israel, and a very important part, is the charge for us as a people to be worthy and willing to help prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord.

As we listen to the messages that have been carefully prepared by our leaders under the direction of the Holy Ghost, I invite you to pray to identify the debris you should remove from your life so you can become more worthy.

I love you, my dear brothers and sisters, and testify that our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son know and love you individually. They stand ready to assist you in every step forward you take. Welcome to general conference and to the privilege of hearing the voice of the Lord. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. 2 Nephi 27:21.

2. Doctrine and Covenants 88:73. Become More Worthy by Removing Debris from Our Lives | Russell M. Nelson

3. See Doctrine and Covenants 13:1.

What We Are Learning and Will Never Forget

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2021 | General Priesthood session | [Link](#)

If you look at your life prayerfully, I believe you will see many ways in which the Lord has been guiding you through this time of hardship.

My dear brethren, I have looked forward to this virtual meeting with you. The last time we held a priesthood session of general conference was in April 2019. Much has happened in the past two years! Some of you have lost loved ones. Others have lost jobs, livelihood, or health. Still others have lost a sense of peace or hope for the future. My heart goes out to each one of you who has suffered these or other losses. I pray constantly that the Lord will comfort you. As you continue to let God prevail in your life, I know that He is just as optimistic about your future as He has ever been.

Amid the losses we have experienced, there are also some things we have found. Some have found deeper faith in our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Many have found a fresh perspective on life—even an eternal perspective. You may have found stronger relationships with your loved ones and with the Lord. I hope you have found an increased ability to hear Him and receive personal revelation. Difficult trials often provide opportunities to grow that would not have come in any other way.

Think back on the past two years. How have you grown? What have you learned? You might initially wish you could go back to 2019 and stay there! But if you look at your life prayerfully, I believe you will see many ways in which the Lord has been guiding you through this time of hardship, helping you to become a more devoted, more converted man—a true man of God.

I know the Lord has great and marvelous plans for us—individually and collectively. With compassion and patience, He says:

“Ye are little children, and ye have not as yet understood how great blessings the Father hath ... prepared for you;

“And ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along.”¹

My dear brothers, I testify that He has been, and is, indeed leading us along, as we seek to hear Him. He wants us to grow and to learn, even through—perhaps especially through—adversity.

Adversity is a great teacher. What have you learned in the past two years that you always want to remember? Your answers will be unique to you, but may I suggest four lessons I hope we have all learned and will never forget.

Lesson 1: The Home Is the Center of Faith and Worship

Often when the Lord warns us about the perils of the last days, He counsels thus: “Stand ye in holy places, and be not moved.”² These “holy places” certainly include the Lord’s temples and meetinghouses. But as our ability to gather in these places has been restricted in varying degrees, we have learned that one of the holiest of places on earth is the home—yes, even your home.

Brethren, you bear the priesthood of God. “The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven.”³ You and your family have received priesthood ordinances. It is “in the ordinances [of the priesthood that] the power of godliness is manifest.”⁴ That power is available to you and your family in your own home as you keep the covenants you have made.⁵

Just 185 years ago, this very day, April 3, 1836, Elijah restored the keys of the priesthood that allow our families to be sealed together forever. That is why it felt so good to administer the sacrament in your home. How do you think it affected your family members to see you—their father, grandfather, husband, son, or brother—administer this holy ordinance? What will you do to retain that sacred feeling in your family?

You may feel that there is still more you need to do to make your home truly a sanctuary of faith. If so, please do it! If you are married, counsel with your wife as your equal partner in this crucial work. There are few pursuits more important than this. Between now and the time the Lord comes again, we all need our homes to be places of serenity and security.⁶

Attitudes and actions that invite the Spirit will increase the holiness of your home. Equally certain is the fact that holiness will vanish if there is anything in your behavior or environment that offends the Holy Spirit, for then “the heavens withdraw themselves.”⁷

Have you ever wondered why the Lord wants us to make our homes the center of gospel learning and gospel living? It is not just to prepare us for, and help us through, a pandemic. Present restrictions on gathering will eventually end. However, your commitment to make your home your primary sanctuary of faith should never end. As faith and holiness decrease in this fallen world, your need for holy places will increase. I urge you to continue to make your home a truly holy place “and be not moved”⁸ from that essential goal.

Lesson 2: We Need Each Other

God wants us to work together and help each other. That is why He sends us to earth in families and organizes us into wards and stakes. That is why He asks us to serve and minister to each other. That is why He asks us to live in the world but not be of the world.⁹ We can accomplish so much more together than we can alone.¹⁰ God’s plan of happiness would be frustrated if His children remained isolated one from another.

The recent pandemic has been unique in that it has affected everyone in the world at essentially the same time. While some have suffered more than others, we have all been challenged in some way. Because of this, our common trial has the potential to help unite God’s children as never before. So, I ask, has this shared trial drawn you closer to your neighbors—to your brothers and sisters across the street and around the world?

In this regard, the two great commandments can guide us: first, to love God and, second, to love our neighbor.¹¹ We show our love by serving.

If you know of anyone who is alone, reach out—even if you feel alone too! You do not need to have a reason or a message or business to transact. Just say hello and show your love. Technology can help you. Pandemic or not, each precious child of God needs to know that he or she is not alone!

Lesson 3: Your Priesthood Quorum Is Meant for More Than Just a Meeting

During the pandemic, Sunday quorum meetings were canceled for a time. Some quorums are now able to meet virtually. Nevertheless, the work that the Lord has given to priesthood quorums was never meant to be confined to a meeting. Meetings are only a small part of what a quorum is meant for and what it can do.

My brethren of the Aaronic Priesthood and elders quorums, expand your vision of why we have quorums. How does the Lord wish you would use your quorum to accomplish His work—now? Seek revelation from the Lord. Humble yourself! Ask! Listen! If you have

been called to lead, counsel as a presidency and with quorum members. Whatever your priesthood office or calling, let God prevail in your commitment as a member of your quorum and in your service. Experience with joy the righteousness you will bring to pass as you are “anxiously engaged in a good cause.”¹² Quorums are in a unique position to accelerate the gathering of Israel on both sides of the veil.

Lesson 4: We Hear Jesus Christ Better When We Are Still

We live in a time prophesied long ago, when “all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men’s hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people.”¹³ That was true before the pandemic, and it will be true after. Commotion in the world will continue to increase. In contrast, the voice of the Lord is not “a voice of a great tumultuous noise, but ... it [is] a still voice of perfect mildness, [like] a whisper, and it [pierces] even to the very soul.”¹⁴ In order to hear this still voice, you too must be still!¹⁵

For a time, the pandemic has canceled activities that would normally fill our lives. Soon we may be able to choose to fill that time again with the noise and commotion of the world. Or we can use our time to hear the voice of the Lord whispering His guidance, comfort, and peace. Quiet time is sacred time—time that will facilitate personal revelation and instill peace.

Discipline yourself to have time alone and with your loved ones. Open your heart to God in prayer. Take time to immerse yourself in the scriptures and worship in the temple.

My dear brethren, there are many things the Lord wants us to learn from our experiences during this pandemic. I have listed only four. I invite you to make your own list, consider it carefully, and share it with those you love.

The future is bright for God’s covenant-keeping people.¹⁶ The Lord will increasingly call upon His servants who worthily hold the priesthood to bless, comfort, and strengthen mankind and to help prepare the world and its people for His Second Coming. It behooves each of us to measure up to the sacred ordination we have received. We can do this! I so testify, with my expression of love for each of you, my beloved brethren, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Doctrine and Covenants 78:17–18.

2. Doctrine and Covenants 87:8; see also Matthew 24:15; Doctrine and Covenants 45:31–33; 101:21–22.

3. Doctrine and Covenants 121:36.

4. Doctrine and Covenants 84:20.
5. See John 4:20–23; Alma 32:9–16.
6. See Alma 50:4.
7. Doctrine and Covenants 121:37.
8. Doctrine and Covenants 87:8; emphasis added.
9. See John 17:15–16.
10. As an example, in 2020, the Church made donations to support more than 1,000 COVID-19 relief efforts around the globe. These efforts were made far more effective because we partnered with other humanitarian organizations, including Convoy of Hope, Feeding America, Partnership with Native Americans, the Salvation Army, the United Way, and the World Food Programme (see “2020 Year in Review,” Newsroom, Dec. 21, 2020, newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org). We extend our reach and our influence for good by working together.
11. See Mark 12:30–31.
12. See Doctrine and Covenants 58:27–28.
13. Doctrine and Covenants 88:91.
14. Helaman 5:30; see also 1 Kings 19:12; 3 Nephi 11:3.
15. See Psalm 46:10; Doctrine and Covenants 101:16.
16. See Doctrine and Covenants 82:14.

Christ Is Risen; Faith in Him Will Move Mountains

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2021 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

Faith in Jesus Christ is the greatest power available to us in this life. All things are possible to them that believe.

My dear brothers and sisters, I am grateful for the privilege of speaking with you on this Easter Sunday.¹ The atoning sacrifice and Resurrection of Jesus Christ changed each of our lives forever. We love Him and gratefully worship Him and our Heavenly Father.

During the past six months, we have continued to grapple with a global pandemic. I marvel at your resilience and spiritual strength in the face of illness, loss, and isolation. I pray constantly that, through it all, you will feel the Lord's unfailing love for you. If you have responded to your trials with a stronger discipleship, this past year will not have been in vain.

This morning, we have heard from Church leaders who come from every populated continent on earth. Truly, the blessings of the gospel are for every race, language, and people. The Church of Jesus Christ is a global church. Jesus Christ is our leader.

Thankfully, even a pandemic has not been able to slow the onward march of His truth. The gospel of Jesus Christ is exactly what is needed in this confused, contentious, and weary world.

Each of God's children deserves the opportunity to hear and accept the healing, redeeming message of Jesus Christ. No other message is more vital to our happiness—now and forever.² No other message is more filled with hope. No other message can eliminate contention in our society.

Faith in Jesus Christ is the foundation of all belief and the conduit of divine power. According to the Apostle Paul, "Without faith it is impossible to please [God]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."³

Everything good in life—every potential blessing of eternal significance—begins with faith. Allowing God to prevail in our lives begins with faith that He is willing to guide us. True repentance begins with faith that Jesus Christ has the power to cleanse, heal, and strengthen us.⁴

“Deny not the power of God,” the prophet Moroni declared, “for he worketh by power, according to the faith of the children of men.”⁵ It is our faith that unlocks the power of God in our lives.

And yet, exercising faith can seem overwhelming. At times we may wonder if we can possibly muster enough faith to receive the blessings that we so desperately need. However, the Lord put those fears to rest through the words of the Book of Mormon prophet Alma.

Alma asks us simply to experiment upon the word and “exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if [we] can no more than desire to believe.”⁶ The phrase “particle of faith” reminds me of the Lord’s biblical promise that if we “have faith as a grain of mustard seed,” we shall be able to “say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto [us].”⁷

The Lord understands our mortal weakness. We all falter at times. But He also knows of our great potential. The mustard seed starts small but grows into a tree large enough for birds to nest in its branches. The mustard seed represents a small but growing faith.⁸

The Lord does not require perfect faith for us to have access to His perfect power. But He does ask us to believe.

My dear brothers and sisters, my call to you this Easter morning is to start today to increase your faith. Through your faith, Jesus Christ will increase your ability to move the mountains in your life,⁹ even though your personal challenges may loom as large as Mount Everest.

Your mountains may be loneliness, doubt, illness, or other personal problems. Your mountains will vary, and yet the answer to each of your challenges is to increase your faith. That takes work. Lazy learners and lax disciples will always struggle to muster even a particle of faith.

To do anything well requires effort. Becoming a true disciple of Jesus Christ is no exception. Increasing your faith and trust in Him takes effort. May I offer five suggestions to help you develop that faith and trust.

First, study. Become an engaged learner. Immerse yourself in the scriptures to understand better Christ's mission and ministry. Know the doctrine of Christ so that you understand its power for your life. Internalize the truth that the Atonement of Jesus Christ applies to you. He took upon Himself your misery, your mistakes, your weakness, and your sins. He paid the compensatory price and provided the power for you to move every mountain you will ever face. You obtain that power with your faith, trust, and willingness to follow Him.

Moving your mountains may require a miracle. Learn about miracles. Miracles come according to your faith in the Lord. Central to that faith is trusting His will and timetable—how and when He will bless you with the miraculous help you desire. Only your unbelief will keep God from blessing you with miracles to move the mountains in your life.¹⁰

The more you learn about the Savior, the easier it will be to trust in His mercy, His infinite love, and His strengthening, healing, and redeeming power. The Savior is never closer to you than when you are facing or climbing a mountain with faith.

Second, choose to believe in Jesus Christ. If you have doubts about God the Father and His Beloved Son or the validity of the Restoration or the veracity of Joseph Smith's divine calling as a prophet, choose to believe¹¹ and stay faithful. Take your questions to the Lord and to other faithful sources. Study with the desire to believe rather than with the hope that you can find a flaw in the fabric of a prophet's life or a discrepancy in the scriptures. Stop increasing your doubts by rehearsing them with other doubters. Allow the Lord to lead you on your journey of spiritual discovery.

Third, act in faith. What would you do if you had more faith? Think about it. Write about it. Then receive more faith by doing something that requires more faith.

Fourth, partake of sacred ordinances worthily. Ordinances unlock the power of God for your life.¹²

And fifth, ask your Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, for help.

Faith takes work. Receiving revelation takes work. But "every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."¹³ God knows what will help your faith grow. Ask, and then ask again.

A nonbeliever might say that faith is for the weak. But this assertion overlooks the power of faith. Would the Savior's Apostles have continued to teach His doctrine after His death, at the peril of their lives, if they had doubted Him?¹⁴ Would Joseph and Hyrum Smith have suffered martyrs' deaths defending the Restoration of the Lord's

Church unless they had a sure witness that it was true? Would nearly 2,000 Saints have died along the pioneer trail¹⁵ if they did not have faith that the gospel of Jesus Christ had been restored? Truly, faith is the power that enables the unlikely to accomplish the impossible.

Do not minimize the faith you already have. It takes faith to join the Church and remain faithful. It takes faith to follow prophets rather than pundits and popular opinion. It takes faith to serve a mission during a pandemic. It takes faith to live a chaste life when the world shouts that God's law of chastity is now outmoded. It takes faith to teach the gospel to children in a secular world. It takes faith to plead for the life of a loved one and even more faith to accept a disappointing answer.

Two years ago, Sister Nelson and I visited Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, and Tahiti. Each of those island nations had experienced heavy rains for days. Members had fasted and prayed that their outdoor meetings would be protected from the rain.

In Samoa, Fiji, and Tahiti, just as the meetings began, the rain stopped. But in Tonga, the rain did not stop. Yet 13,000 faithful Saints came hours early to get a seat, waited patiently through a steady downpour, and then sat through a very wet two-hour meeting.

We saw vibrant faith at work among each of those islanders—faith sufficient to stop the rain and faith to persevere when the rain did not stop.

The mountains in our lives do not always move how or when we would like. But our faith will always propel us forward. Faith always increases our access to godly power.

Please know this: if everything and everyone else in the world whom you trust should fail, Jesus Christ and His Church will never fail you. The Lord never slumbers, nor does He sleep.¹⁶ He "is the same yesterday, today, and [tomorrow]."¹⁷ He will not forsake His covenants,¹⁸ His promises, or His love for His people. He works miracles today, and He will work miracles tomorrow.¹⁹

Faith in Jesus Christ is the greatest power available to us in this life. All things are possible to them that believe.²⁰

Your growing faith in Him will move mountains—not the mountains of rock that beautify the earth but the mountains of misery in your lives. Your flourishing faith will help you turn challenges into unparalleled growth and opportunity.

On this Easter Sunday, with my deep feelings of love and gratitude, I declare my witness that Jesus Christ is indeed risen. He is risen to lead His Church. He is risen to bless the

lives of all of God's children, wherever they live. With faith in Him, we can move the mountains in our lives. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. In some parts of the world, people use a unique and special way of exchanging greetings on Easter morning. In their local language, the greeter will say, "Christ is risen!" The greeted person then responds, "Truly! He is risen!" For example, the exchange of Easter greetings by Russian speakers begins with "Христос воскрес" (Christ is risen [resurrected]!), answered by "Воистину! воскрес!" (Truly! He is risen!).

2. See Mosiah 2:41.

3. Hebrews 11:6. Lectures on Faith states that faith "is the first great governing principle which has power, dominion, and authority over all things" ([1985], 5).

4. See Matthew 11:28–30; Alma 7:12–13; Ether 12:27.

5. Moroni 10:7; emphasis added.

6. Alma 32:27; emphasis added.

7. Matthew 17:20, emphasis added; see also Helaman 12:9, 13.

8. See Doctrine and Covenants 78:17–18. The reward for putting off the natural man is to become "a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord" (Mosiah 3:19).

9. See 1 Nephi 7:12.

10. See Mormon 9:19–21; Ether 12:30.

11. See 2 Nephi 33:10–11.

12. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:20.

13. Matthew 7:8.

14. Without the power of faith, would Abinadi have suffered death by fire for refusing to deny what he knew to be true? (see Mosiah 17:7–20). Without that power, would Ether have hidden in the cavity of a rock (see Ether 13:13–14) and Moroni endured years of loneliness (see Moroni 1:1–3) when their lives could have been much more comfortable if they had only denounced what they believed?

15. See Melvin L. Bashore, H. Dennis Tolley, and the BYU Pioneer Mortality Team, "Mortality on the Mormon Trail, 1847–1868," *BYU Studies*, vol. 53, no. 4 (2014), 115.

16. See Psalm 121:4.

17. Mormon 9:9.

18. See Isaiah 54:10; 3 Nephi 22:10.

19. See Mormon 9:10–11, 15.

20. See Mark 9:23.

COVID-19 and Temples

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2021 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

Keep your temple covenants and blessings foremost in your minds and hearts. Stay true to the covenants you have made.

My beloved brothers and sisters, we have truly had a spiritual feast. How grateful I am for the prayers, messages, and music of the entire conference. Thanks to each of you for joining with us, wherever you are.

Early last year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic and our desire to be good global citizens, we made the difficult decision to close all temples temporarily. During the ensuing months, we have felt inspired to reopen temples gradually through a very cautious approach. Temples are now being opened in four phases, adhering strictly to local government regulations and safety protocols.

For temples in phase 1, qualified couples who have previously received their own endowments can be sealed as husband and wife.

For temples in phase 2, all ordinances for the living are performed, including one's own endowment, the sealing of husband and wife, and the sealing of children to parents. We have recently amended provisions of phase 2 and allow our youth, new members, and others with a limited-use recommend to participate in proxy baptisms for their ancestors.

For temples in phase 3, those with scheduled appointments may participate not only in ordinances for the living but also in all proxy ordinances for deceased ancestors.

Phase 4 is a return to full, regular temple activity.

We are grateful for your patience and devoted service during this changing and challenging period. I pray that your desire to worship and serve in the temple burns more brightly now than ever.

You may be wondering when you will be able to return to the temple. Answer: Your temple will be open when local government regulations allow it. When the incidence of COVID-19 in your area is within safe limits, your temple will be reopened. Do all you can

to bring COVID numbers down in your area so that your temple opportunities can increase.

Meanwhile, keep your temple covenants and blessings foremost in your minds and hearts. Stay true to the covenants you have made.

We are building now for the future! Forty-one temples are presently under construction or renovation. Just last year, despite the pandemic, ground was broken for 21 new temples!

We want to bring the house of the Lord even closer to our members, that they may have the sacred privilege of attending the temple as often as their circumstances allow.

As I announce our plans to construct 20 more temples, I ponder and praise pioneers—past and present—whose consecrated lives have helped to make this history today. A new temple will be built in each of the following locations: Oslo, Norway; Brussels, Belgium; Vienna, Austria; Kumasi, Ghana; Beira, Mozambique; Cape Town, South Africa; Singapore, Republic of Singapore; Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Cali, Colombia; Querétaro, Mexico; Torreón, Mexico; Helena, Montana; Casper, Wyoming; Grand Junction, Colorado; Farmington, New Mexico; Burley, Idaho; Eugene, Oregon; Elko, Nevada; Yorba Linda, California; and Smithfield, Utah.

Temples are a vital part of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness. Ordinances of the temple fill our lives with power and strength available in no other way. We thank God for those blessings.

As we close this conference, we again express our love for you. We pray that God will shower His blessings and watchcare upon each of you. Together we are engaged in His sacred service. With courage, let us all press on in the glorious work of the Lord! For this I pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Pure Truth, Pure Doctrine, and Pure Revelation

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2021 | Saturday morning session | [Link](#)

Please make this conference a time of feasting on messages from the Lord through His servants.

My dear brothers and sisters, welcome to general conference! What a joy it is to be with you! You have been on my mind almost constantly during the past six months. I have prayed about you and for you. During recent weeks I have prayed intently that this conference would be a time of revelation and reflection for all who seek those blessings.

We are delighted to be speaking to you from the Conference Center once again. Most of the seats remain empty, but the presence of some members of the Tabernacle Choir is a wonderful step forward. We welcome you all to this largely virtual conference, wherever you are.

We are still dealing with the ravages of COVID-19 and its variants. We thank you for following our counsel and the advice of medical experts and government officials in your own communities.

We convene each general conference as directed by the Lord.¹ The format has varied over the years. When I was much younger, conference lasted three or four days. Later, conference was reduced to two days. Every message—then and now—is the result of earnest prayer and much spiritual preparation.

The General Authorities and General Officers of the Church who speak will focus their messages on our Savior, Jesus Christ, His mercy, and His infinite redeeming power. There has never been a time in the history of the world when knowledge of our Savior is more personally vital and relevant to every human soul. Imagine how quickly the devastating conflicts throughout the world—and those in our individual lives—would be resolved if we all chose to follow Jesus Christ and heed His teachings.

In that spirit, I invite you to listen for three things during this conference: pure truth, the pure doctrine of Christ, and pure revelation. Contrary to the doubts of some, there really is such a thing as right and wrong. There really is absolute truth—eternal truth. One of the plagues of our day is that too few people know where to turn for truth.² I can assure you that what you will hear today and tomorrow constitutes pure truth.

The pure doctrine of Christ is powerful. It changes the life of everyone who understands it and seeks to implement it in his or her life. The doctrine of Christ helps us find and stay on the covenant path. Staying on that narrow but well-defined path will ultimately qualify us to receive all that God has.³ Nothing could be worth more than all our Father has!

Finally, pure revelation for the questions in your heart will make this conference rewarding and unforgettable. If you have not yet sought for the ministering of the Holy Ghost to help you hear what the Lord would have you hear during these two days, I invite you to do so now. Please make this conference a time of feasting on messages from the Lord through His servants. Learn how to apply them in your life.

This is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We are His covenant people. The Lord declared that He would hasten His work in its time,⁴ and He is doing so at an ever-increasing pace. We are privileged to participate in His holy work.

I invoke a blessing upon all who are seeking greater light, knowledge, and truth. I express my love for each of you, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 20:61, 64, 67; 26:1.

2. See Doctrine and Covenants 123:12.

3. See Ether 4:14; Doctrine and Covenants 78:17–18; 84:38.

4. See Doctrine and Covenants 88:73.

The Temple and Your Spiritual Foundation

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2021 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

Whenever any kind of upheaval occurs in your life, the safest place to be spiritually is living inside your temple covenants!

My dear brothers and sisters, I am grateful to be with you this morning to share the feelings of my heart.

As you know, we are performing major renovations on the historic Salt Lake Temple. This complex project includes major reinforcement of its original foundation, which has served well for more than a century. But this temple must stand much longer. In late May, I inspected the progress on this massive project. I thought you would appreciate seeing what my wife Wendy and I saw. I think you'll see why the hymn "How Firm a Foundation"¹ has come to have new meaning for us.

Video from the site of the Salt Lake Temple renovation: "We are looking at the original foundation of the Salt Lake Temple. I am standing in an area beneath what was the Garden Room. As I examine the craftsmanship of this entire building, I marvel at what the pioneers accomplished. I am totally in awe when I consider that they built this magnificent temple with only tools and techniques available to them more than a century ago.

"These many decades later, however, if we examine the foundation closely, we can see the effects of erosion, gaps in the original stonework, and varying stages of stability in the masonry.

"Now as I witness what modern engineers, architects, and construction experts can do to reinforce that original foundation, I am absolutely amazed. Their work is astonishing!

"The foundation of any building, particularly one as large as this one, must be strong and resilient enough to withstand earthquakes, corrosion, high winds, and the inevitable settling that affects all buildings. The complex task of strengthening now

underway will reinforce this sacred temple with the foundation that can and will stand the test of time.”

We are sparing no effort to give this venerable temple, which had become increasingly vulnerable, a foundation that will withstand the forces of nature into the Millennium. In like manner, it is now time that we each implement extraordinary measures—perhaps measures we have never taken before—to strengthen our personal spiritual foundations. Unprecedented times call for unprecedented measures.

My dear brothers and sisters, these are the latter days. If you and I are to withstand the forthcoming perils and pressures, it is imperative that we each have a firm spiritual foundation built upon the rock of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.²

So I ask each of you, how firm is your foundation? And what reinforcements to your testimony and understanding of the gospel are needed?

The temple lies at the center of strengthening our faith and spiritual fortitude because the Savior and His doctrine are the very heart of the temple. Everything taught in the temple, through instruction and through the Spirit, increases our understanding of Jesus Christ. His essential ordinances bind us to Him through sacred priesthood covenants. Then, as we keep our covenants, He endows us with His healing, strengthening power.³ And oh, how we will need His power in the days ahead.

We have been promised that “if [we] are prepared [we] shall not fear.”⁴ This assurance has profound implications today. The Lord has declared that despite today’s unprecedented challenges, those who build their foundations upon Jesus Christ, and have learned how to draw upon His power, need not succumb to the unique anxieties of this era.

Temple ordinances and covenants are ancient. The Lord instructed Adam and Eve to pray, make covenants, and offer sacrifices.⁵ Indeed, “whenever the Lord has had a people on the earth who will obey His word, they have been commanded to build temples.”⁶ The standard works are replete with references to temple teachings, clothing, language, and more.⁷ Everything we believe and every promise God has made to His covenant people come together in the temple. In every age, the temple has underscored the precious truth that those who make covenants with God and keep them are children of the covenant.

Thus, in the house of the Lord, we can make the same covenants with God that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob made. And we can receive the same blessings! Temples have been part of this dispensation from its earliest days.⁸ Elijah committed the keys of

sealing authority to Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple. The fulness of the priesthood was restored in the Nauvoo Temple.⁹

Until his martyrdom, Joseph Smith continued to receive revelations that furthered the restoration of the endowment and sealing ordinances.¹⁰ He recognized, however, that further refinement was needed. After administering the endowment to Brigham Young in May 1842, Joseph told Brigham, “This is not arranged right, but we have done the best we could under the circumstances in which we are placed, and I wish you to take this matter in hand and organize and systematize all these ceremonies.”¹¹

Following the Prophet’s death, President Young oversaw the completion of the Nauvoo Temple¹² and later built temples in the Utah Territory. At the dedication of the lower stories of the St. George Temple, Brigham Young vigorously declared the urgency of vicarious temple work when he said, “When I think upon this subject, I want the tongues of seven thunders to wake up the people.”¹³

From that time forward, temple ordinances were gradually refined. President Harold B. Lee explained why procedures, policies, and even the administration of temple ordinances continue to change within the Savior’s restored Church. President Lee said: “The principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ are divine. Nobody changes the principles and [doctrine] of the Church except the Lord by revelation. But methods change as the inspired direction comes to those who preside at a given time.”¹⁴

Consider how administering the sacrament has changed over the years. In earlier days, the water of the sacrament was offered to the congregation in one large vessel. Everyone drank from it. Now we use individual disposable cups. The procedure changed, but the covenants remain the same.

Ponder these three truths:

1. The Restoration is a process, not an event, and will continue until the Lord comes again.
2. The ultimate objective of the gathering of Israel¹⁵ is to bring the blessings of the temple to God’s faithful children.
3. As we seek how to accomplish that objective more effectively, the Lord reveals more insights. The ongoing Restoration needs ongoing revelation.

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have often asked the Lord if there are better ways to take the blessings of the temple to His faithful children. We seek guidance regularly on how to ensure worldwide accuracy and consistency of

temple instruction, covenants, and ordinances despite differences in language and culture.

Under the Lord's direction and in answer to our prayers, recent procedural adjustments have been made. He is the One who wants you to understand with great clarity exactly what you are making covenants to do. He is the One who wants you to experience fully His sacred ordinances. He wants you to comprehend your privileges, promises, and responsibilities. He wants you to have spiritual insights and awakenings you've never had before. This He desires for all temple patrons, no matter where they live.

Current adjustments in temple procedures, and others that will follow, are continuing evidence that the Lord is actively directing His Church. He is providing opportunities for each of us to bolster our spiritual foundations more effectively by centering our lives on Him and on the ordinances and covenants of His temple. When you bring your temple recommend, a contrite heart, and a seeking mind to the Lord's house of learning, He will teach you.

Should distance, health challenges, or other constraints prohibit your temple attendance for a season, I invite you to set a regular time to rehearse in your mind the covenants you have made.

If you don't yet love to attend the temple, go more often—not less. Let the Lord, through His Spirit, teach and inspire you there. I promise you that over time, the temple will become a place of safety, solace, and revelation.

If it were possible for me to speak one-on-one with every young adult, I would plead with you to seek a companion with whom you can be sealed in the temple. You may wonder what difference this will make in your life. I promise it will make all the difference! As you marry in the temple and return repeatedly, you will be strengthened and guided in your decisions.

If I could speak with each husband and wife who have still not been sealed in the temple, I would plead with you to take the necessary steps to receive that crowning, life-changing ordinance.¹⁶ Will it make a difference? Only if you want to progress forever and be together forever. Wishing to be together forever will not make it so. No other ceremony or contract will make it so.¹⁷

If I could speak to each man or woman who longs for marriage but has not yet found his or her eternal companion, I would urge you not to wait until marriage to be endowed in the house of the Lord. Begin now to learn and experience what it means to be armed with priesthood power.

And to each of you who has made temple covenants, I plead with you to seek—prayerfully and consistently—to understand temple covenants and ordinances.¹⁸ Spiritual doors will open. You will learn how to part the veil between heaven and earth, how to ask for God’s angels to attend you, and how better to receive direction from heaven. Your diligent efforts to do so will reinforce and strengthen your spiritual foundation.

My dear brothers and sisters, when renovations on the Salt Lake Temple are completed, there will be no safer place during an earthquake in the Salt Lake Valley than inside that temple.

Likewise, whenever any kind of upheaval occurs in your life, the safest place to be spiritually is living inside your temple covenants!

Please believe me when I say that when your spiritual foundation is built solidly upon Jesus Christ, you have no need to fear. As you are true to your covenants made in the temple, you will be strengthened by His power. Then, when spiritual earthquakes occur, you will be able to stand strong because your spiritual foundation is solid and immovable.

I love you, dear brothers and sisters. These truths I know: God, our Heavenly Father, wants you to choose to come home to Him. His plan of eternal progression is not complicated, and it honors your agency. You are free to choose who you will be—and with whom you will be—in the world to come!

God lives! Jesus is the Christ! This is His Church, restored to help you fulfill your divine destiny. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See “How Firm a Foundation,” Hymns, no. 85.

2. So that “when the devil [sends] forth his mighty [wind], ... it shall have no power over [us] ... because of the rock upon which [we] are built, which is a *sure foundation*, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall” (Helaman 5:12; emphasis added).

3. See Doctrine and Covenants 109:15, 22.

4. Doctrine and Covenants 38:30; see also Doctrine and Covenants 10:55.

5. See Moses 5:5–6.

6. Bible Dictionary, “Temple.”

7. For example, see Exodus 28; 29; Leviticus 8. The tabernacle of Moses was known as a “tent of the testimony” (Numbers 9:15) and a “tabernacle of testimony” (Exodus 38:21). Solomon’s temple was destroyed in 587 BC, a few years after Lehi’s family left Jerusalem. The restoration of this temple by Zerubbabel took place some 70 years later. It was then damaged by fire in 37 BC. Herod expanded the temple in about 16 BC. Then this temple, known by Jesus, was destroyed in AD 70. Nephi had

temple-like experiences by going “into the mount oft” to pray (1 Nephi 18:3) and later, in the Americas, built a temple “after the manner of the temple of Solomon,” though it was less ornate (see 2 Nephi 5:16).

8. See Doctrine and Covenants 88:119; 124:31.

9. See Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16; 124:28. The cornerstone for the Nauvoo Temple was laid on April 6, 1841, just a few months after Joseph Smith received the revelation to build it. The Nauvoo Temple had augmented functions. For example, the Lord explained that a baptismal font was needed for the Saints to be baptized for those who were dead (see Doctrine and Covenants 124:29–30).

10. See Doctrine and Covenants 131; 132. Doctrine and Covenants 128 contains an epistle Joseph Smith wrote to the Saints concerning baptism for the dead. There he declared that the salvation of the dead “is necessary and essential to our salvation, ... [for] they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect” (verse 15).

11. Joseph Smith, in *Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days*, vol. 1, *The Standard of Truth, 1815–1846* (2018), 454.

12. “Church Historian George A. Smith concluded that 5,634 brothers and sisters received their endowment in the partially completed Nauvoo Temple in December 1845 and January 1846. Sealings of couples continued on through Feb. 7, [1846,] by which time more than 2,000 couples had been united by the priesthood for time and eternity” (Bruce A. Van Orden, “Temple Finished before Exodus,” *Deseret News*, Dec. 9, 1995, deseret.com; see also Richard O. Cowan, “Endowments Bless the Living and Dead,” *Church News*, Aug. 27, 1988, thechurchnews.com).

13. “What do you suppose the fathers would say if they could speak from the dead? Would they not say, ‘We have lain here thousands of years, here in this prison house, waiting for this dispensation to come?’ ... Why, if they had the power the very thunders of heaven would be in our ears, if we could but realize the importance of the work we are engaged in. All the angels in heaven are looking at this little handful of people, and stimulating them to the salvation of the human family. ... When I think upon this subject, I want the tongues of seven thunders to wake up the people” (Discourses of Brigham Young, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 403–4).

14. Harold B. Lee, “God’s Kingdom—a Kingdom of Order,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1971, 10. See also a statement made by President Wilford Woodruff in 1896; he declared: “I want to say, as the president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, that we should now go on and progress. We have not [gotten] through with revelation. ... President [Brigham] Young, who followed President Joseph Smith, led us here. He organized these temples and carried out the purposes of his calling and office. ... He did not receive all the revelations that belong to this work; neither did President Taylor, nor has Wilford Woodruff. There will be no end to this work until it is perfected” (The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff, sel. G. Homer Durham [1946], 153–54).

15. See 3 Nephi 29:8–9.

16. See Doctrine and Covenants 131:2, 4.

17. See Doctrine and Covenants 132:7.

18. Elder John A. Widtsoe wrote: "To the man or woman who goes through the temple, with open eyes, heeding the symbols and the covenants, and making a steady, continuous effort to understand the full meaning, God speaks his word, and revelations come. The endowment is so richly symbolic that only a fool would attempt to describe it; it is so packed full of revelations to those who exercise their strength to seek and see, that no human words can explain or make clear the possibilities that reside in temple service. The endowment which was given by revelation can best be understood by revelation" (in Archibald F. Bennett, *Saviors on Mount Zion* [Sunday School manual, 1950], 168).

Make Time for the Lord

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2021 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

I plead with you today to counter the lure of the world by making time for the Lord in your life—each and every day.

My dear brothers and sisters, for two days we have been well taught by servants of the Lord who have sought diligently to know what He would have them say.

We have been given our charge for the next six months. Now the question is, how will we be different because of what we have heard and felt?

The pandemic has demonstrated how quickly life can change, at times from circumstances beyond our control. However, there are many things we can control. We set our own priorities and determine how we use our energy, time, and means. We decide how we will treat each other. We choose those to whom we will turn for truth and guidance.

The voices and pressures of the world are engaging and numerous. But too many voices are deceptive, seductive, and can pull us off the covenant path. To avoid the inevitable heartbreak that follows, I plead with you today to counter the lure of the world by making time for the Lord in your life—each and every day.

If most of the information you get comes from social or other media, your ability to hear the whisperings of the Spirit will be diminished. If you are not also seeking the Lord through daily prayer and gospel study, you leave yourself vulnerable to philosophies that may be intriguing but are not true. Even Saints who are otherwise faithful can be derailed by the steady beat of Babylon's band.

My brothers and sisters, I plead with you to make time for the Lord! Make your own spiritual foundation firm and able to stand the test of time by doing those things that allow the Holy Ghost to be with you always.

Never underestimate the profound truth that “the Spirit speaketh ... of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be.”¹ “It will show unto you all things what ye should do.”²

Nothing invites the Spirit more than fixing your focus on Jesus Christ. Talk of Christ, rejoice in Christ, feast upon the words of Christ, and press forward with steadfastness in Christ.³ Make your Sabbath a delight as you worship Him, partake of the sacrament, and keep His day holy.⁴

As I emphasized this morning, please make time for the Lord in His holy house. Nothing will strengthen your spiritual foundation like temple service and temple worship.

We thank all who are working on our new temples. They are being built all over the world. Today I am pleased to announce our plans to build more temples at or near the following locations: Kaohsiung, Taiwan; Tacloban, Philippines; Monrovia, Liberia; Kananga, Democratic Republic of the Congo; Antananarivo, Madagascar; Culiacán, Mexico; Vitória, Brazil; La Paz, Bolivia; Santiago West, Chile; Fort Worth, Texas; Cody, Wyoming; Rexburg North, Idaho; Heber Valley, Utah; and reconstruction of the Provo Utah Temple after the Orem Utah Temple is dedicated.

I love you, dear brothers and sisters. The Lord knows you and loves you. He is your Savior and your Redeemer. He leads and guides His Church. He will lead and guide you in your personal life if you will make time for Him in your life—each and every day.

May God be with you until we meet again, I pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Jacob 4:13; emphasis added.

2. 2 Nephi 32:5.

3. See 2 Nephi 31:20.

4. See Exodus 31:13, 16; Isaiah 58:13.

Preaching the Gospel of Peace

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2022 | Saturday morning session | [Link](#)

We have the sacred responsibility to share the power and peace of Jesus Christ with all who will listen.

My dear brothers and sisters, welcome to general conference! I have looked forward to this day with great anticipation. I pray for you every day. I have also prayed that this conference will be a time of spiritual rejuvenation for each one of you.

Since last conference, difficulties in the world have continued. The global pandemic still affects our lives. And now the world has been rocked by a conflict that is raining terror on millions of innocent men, women, and children.

Prophets have foreseen our day, when there would be wars and rumors of wars and when the whole earth would be in commotion.¹ As followers of Jesus Christ, we plead with leaders of nations to find peaceful resolutions to their differences. We call upon people everywhere to pray for those in need, to do what they can to help the distressed, and to seek the Lord's help in ending any major conflicts.

Brothers and sisters, the gospel of Jesus Christ has never been needed more than it is today. Contention violates everything the Savior stood for and taught. I love the Lord Jesus Christ and testify that His gospel is the only enduring solution for peace. His gospel is a gospel of peace.²

His gospel is the only answer when many in the world are stunned with fear.³ This underscores the urgent need for us to follow the Lord's instruction to His disciples to "go ... into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."⁴ We have the sacred responsibility to share the power and peace of Jesus Christ with all who will listen and who will let God prevail in their lives.

Every person who has made covenants with God has promised to care about others and serve those in need. We can demonstrate faith in God and always be ready to respond to those who ask about "the hope that is in [us]."⁵ Each of us has a role to play in the gathering of Israel.

Today I reaffirm strongly that the Lord has asked every worthy, able young man to prepare for and serve a mission. For Latter-day Saint young men, missionary service is a priesthood responsibility. You young men have been reserved for this time when the promised gathering of Israel is taking place. As you serve missions, you play a pivotal role in this unprecedented event!

For you young and able sisters, a mission is also a powerful, but optional, opportunity. We love sister missionaries and welcome them wholeheartedly. What you contribute to this work is magnificent! Pray to know if the Lord would have you serve a mission, and the Holy Ghost will respond to your heart and mind.

Dear young friends, you are each vital to the Lord. He has held you in reserve until now to help gather Israel. Your decision to serve a mission, whether a proselyting or a service mission, will bless you and many others. We also welcome senior couples to serve when their circumstances permit. Their efforts are simply irreplaceable.

All missionaries teach and testify of the Savior. The spiritual darkness in the world makes the light of Jesus Christ needed more than ever. Everyone deserves the chance to know about the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Every person deserves to know where they can find the hope and peace that “[pass] all understanding.”⁶

May this conference be a time of peace and spiritual feasting for you. May you seek and receive personal revelation during these sessions, I pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 88:91.

2. See Doctrine and Covenants 27:16.

3. See Luke 21:26.

4. Mark 16:15, emphasis added; see also Matthew 28:19.

5. 1 Peter 3:15.

6. Philippians 4:7.

The Power of Spiritual Momentum

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2022 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

I would like to suggest five specific actions we can take to help us maintain positive spiritual momentum.

My dear brothers and sisters, I love you. I cherish this opportunity to speak with you today. I pray daily that you will be protected from the fierce attacks of the adversary and have the strength to push forward through whatever challenges you face.

Some trials are deeply private burdens no one else can see. Others are played out on the world stage. The armed conflict in eastern Europe is one of these. I have been to Ukraine and Russia many times. I love those lands, the people, and their languages. I weep and pray for all who are affected by this conflict. As a church we're doing all we can to help those who are suffering and struggling to survive. We invite everyone to continue to fast and pray for all the people being hurt by this calamity. Any war is a horrifying violation of everything the Lord Jesus Christ stands for and teaches.

None of us can control nations or the actions of others or even members of our own families. But we can control ourselves. My call today, dear brothers and sisters, is to end conflicts that are raging in *your* heart, *your* home, and *your* life. Bury any and all inclinations to hurt others—whether those inclinations be a temper, a sharp tongue, or a resentment for someone who has hurt you. The Savior commanded us to turn the other cheek,¹ to love our enemies, and to pray for those who spitefully use us.²

It can be painfully difficult to let go of anger that feels so justified. It can seem impossible to forgive those whose destructive actions have hurt the innocent. And yet, the Savior admonished us to “forgive all men.”³

We are followers of the Prince of Peace. Now more than ever, we need the peace only He can bring. How can we expect peace to exist in the world when we are not *individually* seeking peace and harmony? Brothers and sisters, I know what I'm suggesting is not easy. But followers of Jesus Christ should set the example for all the

world to follow. I plead with you to do all you can to end *personal* conflicts that are currently raging in your hearts and in your lives.

May I underscore this call to action by discussing a concept I was reminded of recently while watching a basketball game.

In that game, the first half was a seesaw battle, back and forth. Then, during the last five seconds of the first half, a guard on one team made a beautiful three-point shot. With only one second left, his teammate stole the inbound pass and made another basket at the buzzer! So that team went into the locker room four points ahead with a palpable surge of momentum. They were able to carry that momentum into the second half and win the game.

Momentum is a powerful concept. We all have experienced it in one form or another—for example, in a vehicle that picks up speed or with a disagreement that suddenly turns into an argument.

So I ask, what can ignite *spiritual momentum*? We have seen examples of both positive and negative momentum. We know followers of Jesus Christ who became converted and grew in their faith. But we also know of once-committed believers who fell away. Momentum can swing either way.

We have never needed *positive* spiritual momentum more than we do now, to counteract the speed with which evil and the darker signs of the times are intensifying. Positive spiritual momentum will keep us moving forward amid the fear and uncertainty created by pandemics, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, and armed hostilities. Spiritual momentum can help us withstand the relentless, wicked attacks of the adversary and thwart his efforts to erode our personal spiritual foundation.

Many actions can ignite positive spiritual momentum. Obedience, love, humility, service, and gratitude⁴ are but a few.

Today I would like to suggest five specific actions we can take to help us maintain positive spiritual momentum.

First: Get on the covenant path and stay there.

Not long ago, I had a vivid dream in which I met a large group of people. They asked me many questions, the most frequent of which was about the covenant path and why it is so important.

In my dream, I explained that we enter the covenant path by being baptized and making our first covenant with God.⁵ Each time we partake of the sacrament, we promise again to take the name of the Savior upon us, to remember Him, and to keep His commandments.⁶ In return, God assures us that we may always have the Spirit of the Lord to be with us.

Later we make additional covenants in the temple, where we receive even greater promises. Ordinances and covenants give us access to godly power. The covenant path is the only path that leads to exaltation and eternal life.

In my dream, a woman then asked how someone who has broken his or her covenants can get back on that path. My answer to her question leads to my second suggestion:

Discover the joy of daily repentance.

How important is repentance? Alma taught that we should “preach nothing save it were repentance and faith on the Lord.”⁷ Repentance is required of every accountable person who desires eternal glory.⁸ There are no exceptions. In a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord chastised early Church leaders for not teaching the gospel to their children.⁹ Repenting is the key to progress. Pure faith keeps us moving forward on the covenant path.

Please do not fear or delay repenting. Satan delights in your misery. Cut it short. Cast his influence out of your life! Start today to experience the joy of putting off the natural man.¹⁰ The Savior loves us always but especially when we repent. He promised that though “the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ... my kindness shall not depart from thee.”¹¹

If you feel you have strayed off the covenant path too far or too long and have no way to return, that simply is not true.¹² Please contact your bishop or branch president. He is the Lord’s agent and will help you experience the joy and relief of repenting.

Now, a caution: Returning to the covenant path does not mean that life will be easy. This path is rigorous and at times will feel like a steep climb.¹³ This ascent, however, is designed to test and teach us, refine our natures, and help us to become saints. It is the only path that leads to exaltation. One prophet¹⁴ described the “blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven ... [and] dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness.”¹⁵

Walking the covenant path, coupled with daily repentance, fuels positive spiritual momentum.

My third suggestion: Learn about God and how He works.

One of our greatest challenges today is distinguishing between the truths of God and the counterfeits of Satan. That is why the Lord warned us to “pray always, ... that [we] may conquer Satan, and ... escape the hands of the servants of Satan that do uphold his work.”¹⁶

Moses provided an example of how to discern between God and Satan. When Satan came tempting Moses, he detected the deception because he had just had a face-to-face interaction with God. Moses quickly realized who Satan was and commanded him to depart.¹⁷ When Satan persisted, Moses knew how to call upon God for more help. Moses received divine strength and rebuked the evil one again, saying, “Depart from me, Satan, for this one God only will I worship.”¹⁸

We should follow that example. Cast Satan’s influence out of your life! Please do not follow him down to his “gulf of misery and endless wo.”¹⁹

With frightening speed, a testimony that is not nourished daily “by the good word of God”²⁰ can crumble. Thus, the antidote to Satan’s scheme is clear: we need daily experiences worshipping the Lord and studying His gospel. I plead with you to let God prevail in your life. Give Him a fair share of your time. As you do, notice what happens to your positive spiritual momentum.

Suggestion number 4: Seek and expect miracles.

Moroni assured us that “God has not ceased to be a God of miracles.”²¹ Every book of scripture demonstrates how willing the Lord is to intervene in the lives of those who believe in Him.²² He parted the Red Sea for Moses, helped Nephi retrieve the brass plates, and restored His Church through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Each of these miracles took time and may not have been exactly what those individuals originally requested from the Lord.

In the same way, the Lord will bless you with miracles if you believe in Him, “doubting nothing.”²³ Do the spiritual work to seek miracles. Prayerfully ask God to help you exercise that kind of faith. I promise that you can experience for yourself that Jesus Christ “giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.”²⁴ Few things will accelerate your spiritual momentum more than realizing the Lord is helping you to move a mountain in your life.

Suggestion number 5: End conflict in your personal life.

I repeat my call to end the conflicts in your life. Exercise the humility, courage, and strength required both to forgive and to seek forgiveness. The Savior has promised that “if [we] forgive men their trespasses, [our] heavenly Father will also forgive [us].”²⁵

Two weeks from today we celebrate Easter. Between now and then, I invite you to seek an end to a personal conflict that has weighed you down. Could there be a more fitting act of gratitude to Jesus Christ for His Atonement? If forgiveness presently seems impossible, plead for power through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ to help you. As you do so, I promise personal peace and a burst of spiritual momentum.

When the Savior atoned for all mankind, He opened a way that those who follow Him can have access to His healing, strengthening, and redeeming power. These spiritual privileges are available to all who seek to hear Him and follow Him.

My dear brothers and sisters, with all the pleadings of my heart, I urge you to get on the covenant path and stay there. Experience the joy of repenting daily. Learn about God and how He works. Seek and expect miracles. Strive to end conflict in your life.

As you act on these pursuits, I promise you the ability to move forward on the covenant path with increased momentum, despite whatever obstacles you face. And I promise you greater strength to resist temptation, more peace of mind, freedom from fear, and greater unity in your families.

God lives! Jesus is the Christ! He lives! He loves us and will help us. Of this I testify in the sacred name of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See 3 Nephi 12:39.

2. See 3 Nephi 12:44.

3. Doctrine and Covenants 64:10; see also verse 9.

4. As the Apostle Paul said, “In every thing give thanks” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). One of the surest antidotes for despair, discouragement, and spiritual lethargy is gratitude. What are some things for which we can give thanks to God? Thank Him for the beauty of the earth, for the Restoration of the gospel, and for the countless ways He and His Son make Their power available to us here on this earth. Thank Him for the scriptures, for angels who respond to our pleas to God for help, for revelation, and for eternal families. And most of all, thank God for the gift of His Son and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which makes it possible for us to fulfill the missions for which we have been sent to earth.

5. To understand the covenant path, it is important to understand that a covenant involves a two-way commitment between God and one of His children. In a covenant, God sets the terms, and

we agree to those terms. In exchange, God makes promises to us. Many covenants are accompanied by outward signs—or sacred ordinances—in which we participate with witnesses present. For example, baptism is a sign to the Lord that the person being baptized has made a covenant to keep the commandments of God.

6. See Moroni 4:3; 5:2; Doctrine and Covenants 20:77, 79.

7. Mosiah 18:20.

8. See Moses 6:50, 57.

9. See Doctrine and Covenants 93:40–48.

10. See Mosiah 3:19.

11. Isaiah 54:10, emphasis added; see also 3 Nephi 22:10. *Kindness* is translated from the Hebrew term *hesed*, a powerful word with deep meaning that encompasses kindness, mercy, covenant love, and more.

12. It is possible to make restitution for some sins but not others. If one person abuses or assaults another, or if one takes the life of another, full restitution cannot be made. The sinner in those cases can only do so much, and a large balance is left owing. Because of the Lord's willingness to forgive a balance due, we can come to Him regardless of how far we have strayed. When we sincerely repent, He will forgive us. Any balance owing between our sins and our ability to make full restitution can be paid only by applying the Atonement of Jesus Christ, who can make a gift of mercy. His willingness to forgive our balance due is a priceless gift.

13. See 2 Nephi 31:18–20.

14. The Nephite prophet King Benjamin.

15. Mosiah 2:41.

16. Doctrine and Covenants 10:5; emphasis added.

17. See Moses 1:16; see also verses 1–20.

18. Moses 1:20.

19. Helaman 5:12.

20. Moroni 6:4.

21. Mormon 9:15; see also verse 19.

22. John the Apostle declared that he recorded the Savior's miracles so "that [we] might believe that Jesus is the Christ" (John 20:31).

23. Mormon 9:21.

24. Isaiah 40:29.

25. Matthew 6:14.

Now Is the Time

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2022 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

Now is the time we can learn. Now is the time we can repent. Now is the time we can bless others.

My dear brothers and sisters, this conference has been historic in many ways. We have been blessed by the prayers, messages, and music. We have been inspired by servants of the Lord.

We have received important direction for the future. My prayer is that the Spirit has spoken to you directly about things the Lord would have you do.

The future is always uncertain. Weather changes. Economic cycles are unpredictable. Disasters, accidents, and illness can change life quickly. These actions are largely beyond our control. But there are some things we can control, including how we spend our time each day.

I like this poem by Henry Van Dyke, posted on a sundial at Wells College in New York. It reads:

The shadow by my finger cast
Divides the future from the past:
Before it, sleeps the unborn hour
In darkness, and beyond thy power:
Behind its unreturning line,
The vanished hour, no longer thine:
One hour alone is in thy hands,—
The NOW on which the shadow stands.¹

Yes, we should learn from the past, and yes, we should prepare for the future. But only now can we do. Now is the time we can learn. Now is the time we can repent. Now is the time we can bless others and “lift up the hands which hang down.”² As Mormon counseled his son Moroni, “Let us labor diligently; ... for we have a labor to perform [while] in this tabernacle of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God.”³

The adversary never sleeps. There will always be opposition to the truth. I repeat my urging from this morning to do those things that will increase your positive spiritual momentum, that lift Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf was talking about, that will keep you moving forward through whatever challenges and opportunities come.

Positive spiritual momentum increases as we worship in the temple and grow in our understanding of the magnificent breadth and depth of the blessings we receive there. I plead with you to counter worldly ways by focusing on the eternal blessings of the temple. Your time there brings blessings for eternity.

As the Church grows, we strive to keep pace by building more temples. Forty-four new temples are presently under construction. More are being renewed. I pray for the skilled people who work on those projects across the world.

In the spirit of prayerful gratitude, I am pleased to announce our plans to build a new temple in each of the following locations: Wellington, New Zealand; Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo; Barcelona, Spain; Birmingham, United Kingdom; Cusco, Peru; Maceió, Brazil; Santos, Brazil; San Luis Potosí, Mexico; Mexico City Benemérito, Mexico; Tampa, Florida; Knoxville, Tennessee; Cleveland, Ohio; Wichita, Kansas; Austin, Texas; Missoula, Montana; Montpelier, Idaho; and Modesto, California.

These 17 temples will bless countless lives on both sides of the veil. I love you, my dear brothers and sisters. More important, the Lord loves you. He is your Savior and your Redeemer. He leads and guides His Church. May we be a people worthy of the Lord, who said, “Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.”⁴

For this I pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Henry Van Dyke, “The Sun-Dial at Wells College,” *Music and Other Poems* (1904), 116.

2. Hebrews 12:12.

3. Moroni 9:6.

4. Jeremiah 30:22.

What Is True?

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2022 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

God is the source of all truth. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints embraces all truth that God conveys to His children.

My beloved brothers and sisters, thanks to all for this inspiring session! Since our conference last April, we have witnessed many world events, ranging from the heartbreaking to the sublime.

We are delighted with reports of large youth conferences being held throughout the world.¹ At these conferences, our noble youth are learning that no matter what happens in their lives, their greatest strength comes from the Lord.²

We rejoice that more temples are being built across the world. With the dedication of each new temple, additional godly power comes into the world to strengthen us and counteracts the intensifying efforts of the adversary.

Abuse constitutes the influence of the adversary. It is a grievous sin.³ As President of the Church, I affirm the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ on this issue. Let me be perfectly clear: any kind of abuse of women, children, or anyone is an abomination to the Lord. He grieves and I grieve whenever anyone is harmed. He mourns and we all mourn for each person who has fallen victim to abuse of any kind. Those who perpetrate these hideous acts are not only accountable to the laws of man but will also face the wrath of Almighty God.

For decades now, the Church has taken extensive measures to protect—in particular—children from abuse. There are many aids on the Church website. I invite you to study them.⁴ These guidelines are in place to protect the innocent. I urge each of us to be alert to anyone who might be in danger of being abused and to act promptly to protect them. The Savior will not tolerate abuse, and as His disciples, neither can we.

The adversary has other disturbing tactics. Among them are his efforts to blur the line between what is true and what is not true. The flood of information available at our fingertips, ironically, makes it increasingly difficult to determine what is true.

This challenge reminds me of an experience Sister Nelson and I had when we visited a dignitary in a country where relatively few people have heard of Jesus Christ. This dear aging friend had recently been quite ill. He told us that during his many days in bed, he often stared at the ceiling and asked, “What is true?”

Many on earth today “are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it.”⁵ Some would have us believe that truth is relative—that each person should determine for himself or herself what is true. Such a belief is but wishful thinking for those who mistakenly think they will not also be accountable to God.

Dear brothers and sisters, God is the source of all truth. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints embraces all truth that God conveys to His children, whether learned in a scientific laboratory or received by direct revelation from Him.

From this pulpit today and tomorrow, you will continue to hear truth. Please make notes of thoughts that catch your attention and those that come into your mind and stay in your heart. Prayerfully ask the Lord to confirm that what you have heard is true.

I love you, my dear brothers and sisters. I pray that this conference will provide the spiritual feast you are seeking. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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1. Known as For the Strength of Youth, or FSJ, conferences.
 2. The guidebook For the Strength of Youth has recently been revised.
 3. See Matthew 18:6; Doctrine and Covenants 121:34–37.
 4. See abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
 5. Doctrine and Covenants 123:12.

Overcome the World and Find Rest

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2022 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

Find rest from the intensity, uncertainty, and anguish of this world by overcoming the world through your covenants with God.

My dear brothers and sisters, I am grateful to greet you on this glorious Sabbath morning. You are constantly on my mind. I marvel at the way you spring into action whenever you see others in need. I stand amazed at the faith and testimony you demonstrate again and again. I weep over your heartaches, disappointments, and worries. I love you. I assure you that our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, love you. They are intimately aware of your circumstances, your goodness, your needs, and your prayers for help. Again and again, I pray for you to feel Their love for you.

Experiencing Their love is vital, as it seems that we are accosted daily by an onslaught of sobering news. You may have had days when you wished you could don your pajamas, curl up in a ball, and ask someone to awaken you when the turmoil is over.

But, my dear brothers and sisters, so many wonderful things are ahead. In coming days, we will see the greatest manifestations of the Savior's power that the world has ever seen. Between now and the time He returns "with power and great glory,"¹ He will bestow countless privileges, blessings, and miracles upon the faithful.

Nonetheless, we are presently living in what surely is a most complicated time in the history of the world. The complexities and challenges leave many people feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. However, consider a recent experience that might shed light on how you and I can find rest.

During the recent open house of the Washington D.C. Temple, a member of the open house committee witnessed an insightful interchange as he escorted several prominent journalists through the temple. Somehow a young family became attached to this media tour. One reporter kept asking about the "journey" of a temple patron as he or she moves through the temple. He wanted to know if the temple journey is symbolic of the challenges in a person's journey through life.

A young boy in the family picked up on the conversation. When the tour group entered an endowment room, the boy pointed to the altar, where people kneel to make covenants with God, and said, “Oh, that’s nice. Here is a place for people to rest on their temple journey.”

I doubt that the boy knew just how profound his observation was. He likely had no idea about the direct connection between making a covenant with God in the temple and the Savior’s stunning promise:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; ... and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”²

Dear brothers and sisters, I grieve for those who leave the Church because they feel membership requires too much of them. They have not yet discovered that making and keeping covenants actually makes life easier! Each person who makes covenants in baptismal fonts and in temples—and keeps them—has increased access to the power of Jesus Christ. Please ponder that stunning truth!

The reward for keeping covenants with God is heavenly power—power that strengthens us to withstand our trials, temptations, and heartaches better. This power eases our way. Those who live the higher laws of Jesus Christ have access to His higher power. Thus, covenant keepers are entitled to a special kind of rest that comes to them through their covenantal relationship with God.

Before the Savior submitted Himself to the agony of Gethsemane and Calvary, He declared to His Apostles, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”³ Subsequently, Jesus entreated each of us to do the same when He said, “I will that ye should overcome the world.”⁴

Dear brothers and sisters, my message to you today is that because Jesus Christ overcame this fallen world, and because He atoned for each of us, you too can overcome this sin-saturated, self-centered, and often exhausting world.

Because the Savior, through His infinite Atonement, redeemed each of us from weakness, mistakes, and sin, and because He experienced every pain, worry, and burden you have ever had,⁵ then as you truly repent and seek His help, you can rise above this present precarious world.

You can overcome the spiritually and emotionally exhausting plagues of the world, including arrogance, pride, anger, immorality, hatred, greed, jealousy, and fear. Despite

the distractions and distortions that swirl around us, you can find true rest—meaning relief and peace—even amid your most vexing problems.

This important truth prompts three fundamental questions:

First, what does it mean to overcome the world?

Second, how do we do it?

And third, how does overcoming the world bless our lives?

What does it mean to overcome the world? It means overcoming the temptation to care more about the things of this world than the things of God. It means trusting the doctrine of Christ more than the philosophies of men. It means delighting in truth, denouncing deception, and becoming “humble followers of Christ.”⁶ It means choosing to refrain from anything that drives the Spirit away. It means being willing to “give away” even our favorite sins.⁷

Now, overcoming the world certainly does not mean becoming perfect in this life, nor does it mean that your problems will magically evaporate—because they won’t. And it does not mean that you won’t still make mistakes. But overcoming the world does mean that your resistance to sin will increase. Your heart will soften as your faith in Jesus Christ increases.⁸ Overcoming the world means growing to love God and His Beloved Son more than you love anyone or anything else.

How, then, do we overcome the world? King Benjamin taught us how. He said that “the natural man is an enemy to God” and remains so forever “unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord.”⁹ Each time you seek for and follow the promptings of the Spirit, each time you do anything good—things that “the natural man” would not do—you are overcoming the world.

Overcoming the world is not an event that happens in a day or two. It happens over a lifetime as we repeatedly embrace the doctrine of Christ. We cultivate faith in Jesus Christ by repenting daily and keeping covenants that endow us with power. We stay on the covenant path and are blessed with spiritual strength, personal revelation, increasing faith, and the ministering of angels. Living the doctrine of Christ can produce the most powerful virtuous cycle, creating spiritual momentum in our lives.¹⁰

As we strive to live the higher laws of Jesus Christ, our hearts and our very natures begin to change. The Savior lifts us above the pull of this fallen world by blessing us with greater charity, humility, generosity, kindness, self-discipline, peace, and rest.

Now, you may be thinking this sounds more like hard spiritual work than rest. But here is the grand truth: while the world insists that power, possessions, popularity, and pleasures of the flesh bring happiness, they do not! They cannot! What they do produce is nothing but a hollow substitute for “the blessed and happy state of those [who] keep the commandments of God.”^{[11](#)}

The truth is that it is much more exhausting to seek happiness where you can never find it! However, when you yoke yourself to Jesus Christ and do the spiritual work required to overcome the world, He, and He alone, does have the power to lift you above the pull of this world.

Now, how does overcoming the world bless our lives? The answer is clear: entering into a covenant relationship with God binds us to Him in a way that makes everything about life easier. Please do not misunderstand me: I did not say that making covenants makes life easy. In fact, expect opposition, because the adversary does not want you to discover the power of Jesus Christ. But yoking yourself with the Savior means you have access to His strength and redeeming power.

I reaffirm a profound teaching of President Ezra Taft Benson: “Men and women who turn their lives over to God will discover that He can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, ... lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace.”^{[12](#)}

These incomparable privileges follow those who seek the support of heaven to help them overcome this world. To this end, I extend to members of the entire Church the same charge I gave to our young adults last May. I urged them then—and I plead with you now—to take charge of your own testimony of Jesus Christ and His gospel. Work for it. Nurture it so that it will grow. Feed it truth. Don’t pollute it with false philosophies of unbelieving men and women. As you make the continual strengthening of your testimony of Jesus Christ your highest priority, watch for miracles to happen in your life.^{[13](#)}

My plea to you this morning is to find rest from the intensity, uncertainty, and anguish of this world by overcoming the world through your covenants with God. Let Him know through your prayers and your actions that you are serious about overcoming the world. Ask Him to enlighten your mind and send the help you need. Each day, record the thoughts that come to you as you pray; then follow through diligently. Spend more time in the temple, and seek to understand how the temple teaches you to rise above this fallen world.^{[14](#)}

As I have stated before, the gathering of Israel is the most important work taking place on earth today. One crucial element of this gathering is preparing a people who are able, ready, and worthy to receive the Lord when He comes again, a people who have already chosen Jesus Christ over this fallen world, a people who rejoice in their agency to live the higher, holier laws of Jesus Christ.

I call upon you, my dear brothers and sisters, to become this righteous people. Cherish and honor your covenants above all other commitments. As you let God prevail in your life, I promise you greater peace, confidence, joy, and yes, rest.

With the power of the holy apostleship vested in me, I bless you in your quest to overcome this world. I bless you to increase your faith in Jesus Christ and learn better how to draw upon His power. I bless you to be able to discern truth from error. I bless you to care more about the things of God than the things of this world. I bless you to see the needs of those around you and strengthen those you love. Because Jesus Christ overcame this world, you can too. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:36: “Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.”

2. Matthew 11:28–30; emphasis added.

3. John 16:33; emphasis added.

4. Doctrine and Covenants 64:2; emphasis added.

5. See Alma 7:11–13.

6. 2 Nephi 28:14.

7. See the account of King Lamoni’s father in Alma 22, especially Alma 22:18.

8. See Mosiah 5:7.

9. Mosiah 3:19; emphasis added.

10. See 2 Nephi 31; 3 Nephi 27:16–20.

11. Mosiah 2:41.

12. Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson (2014), 42–43.

13. See Russell M. Nelson, “Choices for Eternity” (worldwide devotional for young adults, May 15, 2022), broadcasts.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

14. President David O. McKay said that in the temple we take a “step-by-step ascent into the Eternal Presence” (in Truman G. Madsen, *The Temple: Where Heaven Meets Earth* [2008], 11).

Focus on the Temple

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2022 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

I promise that increased time in the temple will bless your life in ways nothing else can.

Dear brothers and sisters, during these five magnificent sessions of general conference, we have once again experienced that the heavens are open! I pray that you have recorded your impressions and will follow through with them. Our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, stand ready to help you. I urge you to increase your efforts to seek Their help.

Recently, Sister Nelson and I had the opportunity to preview the new season 4 of the [Book of Mormon Videos](#) series.¹ We were inspired by them! May I show you a brief excerpt from the scene depicting the Savior's appearance to the Nephites.

It is significant that the Savior chose to appear to the people at the temple. It is His house. It is filled with His power. Let us never lose sight of what the Lord is doing for us now. He is making His temples more accessible. He is accelerating the pace at which we are building temples. He is increasing our ability to help gather Israel. He is also making it easier for each of us to become spiritually refined. I promise that increased time in the temple will bless your life in ways nothing else can.

We currently have 168 operating temples and 53 new temples under construction and another 54 in the preconstruction design phase!² I am pleased to announce our plans to build a new temple in each of the following locations: Busan, Korea; Naga, Philippines; Santiago, Philippines; Eket, Nigeria; Chiclayo, Peru; Buenos Aires City Center, Argentina; Londrina, Brazil; Ribeirão Preto, Brazil; Huehuetenango, Guatemala; Jacksonville, Florida; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Prosper, Texas; Lone Mountain, Nevada; and Tacoma, Washington.

We are also planning to build multiple temples in selected large metropolitan areas where travel time to an existing temple is a major challenge. Therefore, I am pleased to announce four additional locations near Mexico City where new temples will be built in Cuernavaca, Pachuca, Toluca, and Tula.

My dear brothers and sisters, may you focus on the temple in ways you never have before. I bless you to grow closer to God and Jesus Christ every day. I love you. May God be with you until we meet again, I pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. These new videos will be available in many languages on Gospel Library and other channels.

Episodes will be published on a weekly basis beginning today after conference.

2. As of October 1, 2022, four more temples are being renovated (St. George Utah, Manti Utah, Salt Lake, and Columbus Ohio), and three are awaiting dedication (Hamilton New Zealand, Quito Ecuador, and Belém Brazil).

Peacemakers Needed

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2023 | Sunday morning session | [Link](#)

You have your agency to choose contention or reconciliation. I urge you to choose to be a peacemaker, now and always.

My dear brothers and sisters, it is a joy to be with you. During these past six months, you have been constantly on my mind and in my prayers. I pray that the Holy Ghost will communicate what the Lord wants you to hear as I speak to you now.

During my surgical internship many years ago, I assisted a surgeon who was amputating a leg filled with highly infectious gangrene. The operation was difficult. Then, to add to the tension, one of the team performed a task poorly, and the surgeon erupted in anger. In the middle of his tantrum, he threw his scalpel loaded with germs. It landed in my forearm!

Everyone in the operating room—except the out-of-control surgeon—was horrified by this dangerous breach of surgical practice. Gratefully, I did not become infected. But this experience left a lasting impression on me. In that very hour, I promised myself that whatever happened in my operating room, I would never lose control of my emotions. I also vowed that day never to throw anything in anger—whether it be scalpels or words.

Even now, decades later, I find myself wondering if the contaminated scalpel that landed in my arm was any more toxic than the venomous contention that infects our civic dialogue and too many personal relationships today. Civility and decency seem to have disappeared during this era of polarization and passionate disagreements.

Vulgarity, faultfinding, and evil speaking of others are all too common. Too many pundits, politicians, entertainers, and other influencers throw insults constantly. I am greatly concerned that so many people seem to believe that it is completely acceptable to condemn, malign, and vilify anyone who does not agree with them. Many seem eager to damage another's reputation with pathetic and pithy barbs!

Anger never persuades. Hostility builds no one. Contention never leads to inspired solutions. Regrettably, we sometimes see contentious behavior even within our own

ranks. We hear of those who belittle their spouses and children, of those who use angry outbursts to control others, and of those who punish family members with the “silent treatment.” We hear of youth and children who bully and of employees who defame their colleagues.

My dear brothers and sisters, this should not be. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to be examples of how to interact with others—especially when we have differences of opinion. One of the easiest ways to identify a true follower of Jesus Christ is how compassionately that person treats other people.

The Savior made this clear in His sermons to followers in both hemispheres. “Blessed are the peacemakers,” He said.¹ “Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”² And then, of course, He gave the admonition that challenges each of us: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”³

Before His death, the Savior commanded His Twelve Apostles to love one another as He had loved them.⁴ And then He added, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”⁵

The Savior’s message is clear: His true disciples build, lift, encourage, persuade, and inspire—no matter how difficult the situation. True disciples of Jesus Christ are peacemakers.⁶

Today is Palm Sunday. We are preparing to commemorate the most important and transcendent event ever recorded on earth, which is the Atonement and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the best ways we can honor the Savior is to become a peacemaker.⁷

The Savior’s Atonement made it possible for us to overcome all evil—including contention. Make no mistake about it: contention is evil! Jesus Christ declared that those who have “the spirit of contention” are not of Him but are “of the devil, who is the father of contention, and [the devil] stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.”⁸ Those who foster contention are taking a page out of Satan’s playbook, whether they realize it or not. “No man can serve two masters.”⁹ We cannot support Satan with our verbal assaults and then think that we can still serve God.

My dear brothers and sisters, how we treat each other really matters! How we speak to and about others at home, at church, at work, and online really matters. Today, I am asking us to interact with others in a higher, holier way. Please listen carefully. “If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy”¹⁰ that we can say about

another person—whether to his face or behind her back—that should be our standard of communication.

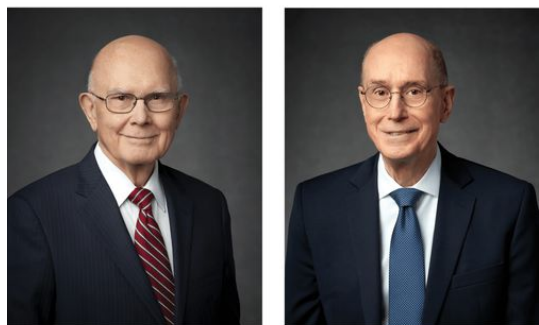
If a couple in your ward gets divorced, or a young missionary returns home early, or a teenager doubts his testimony, they do not need your judgment. They need to experience the pure love of Jesus Christ reflected in your words and actions.

If a friend on social media has strong political or social views that violate everything you believe in, an angry, cutting retort by you will not help. Building bridges of understanding will require much more of you, but that is exactly what your friend needs.

Contention drives away the Spirit—every time. Contention reinforces the false notion that confrontation is the way to resolve differences; but it never is. Contention is a choice. Peacemaking is a choice. You have your agency to choose contention or reconciliation. I urge you to choose to be a peacemaker, now and always.¹¹

Brothers and sisters, we can literally change the world—one person and one interaction at a time. How? By modeling how to manage honest differences of opinion with mutual respect and dignified dialogue.

Differences of opinion are part of life. I work every day with dedicated servants of the Lord who do not always see an issue the same way. They know I want to hear their ideas and honest feelings about everything we discuss—especially sensitive issues.



My two noble counselors, President Dallin H. Oaks and President Henry B. Eyring, are exemplary in the way they express their feelings—especially when they may differ. They do so with pure love for each other. Neither suggests that he knows best and therefore must rigorously defend his position. Neither evidences the need to compete with the other. Because each is filled with charity, “the pure love of Christ,”¹² our deliberations can be guided by the Spirit of the Lord. How I love and honor these two great men!

Charity is the antidote to contention. Charity is the spiritual gift that helps us to cast off the natural man, who is selfish, defensive, prideful, and jealous. Charity is the principal characteristic of a true follower of Jesus Christ.¹³ Charity defines a peacemaker.

When we humble ourselves before God and pray with all the energy of our hearts, God will grant us charity.¹⁴

Those blessed with this supernal gift are long-suffering and kind. They do not envy others and are not caught up in their own importance. They are not easily provoked and do not think evil of others.¹⁵

Brothers and sisters, the pure love of Christ is the answer to the contention that ails us today. Charity propels us “to bear one another’s burdens”¹⁶ rather than heap burdens upon each other. The pure love of Christ allows us “to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things”¹⁷—especially in tense situations. Charity allows us to demonstrate how men and women of Christ speak and act—especially when under fire.

Now, I am not talking about “peace at any price.”¹⁸ I am talking about treating others in ways that are consistent with keeping the covenant you make when you partake of the sacrament. You covenant to always remember the Savior. In situations that are highly charged and filled with contention, I invite you to remember Jesus Christ. Pray to have the courage and wisdom to say or do what He would. As we follow the Prince of Peace, we will become His peacemakers.

At this point you may be thinking that this message would really help someone you know. Perhaps you are hoping that it will help him or her to be nicer to you. I hope it will! But I also hope that you will look deeply into your heart to see if there are shards of pride or jealousy that prevent you from becoming a peacemaker.¹⁹

If you are serious about helping to gather Israel and about building relationships that will last throughout the eternities, now is the time to lay aside bitterness. Now is the time to cease insisting that it is your way or no way. Now is the time to stop doing things that make others walk on eggshells for fear of upsetting you. Now is the time to bury your weapons of war.²⁰ If your verbal arsenal is filled with insults and accusations, now is the time to put them away.²¹ You will arise as a spiritually strong man or woman of Christ.

The temple can help us in our quest. There we are endowed with God’s power, giving us the ability to overcome Satan, the instigator of all contention.²² Cast him out of your relationships! Note that we also rebuke the adversary every time we heal a

misunderstanding or refuse to take offense. Instead, we can show the tender mercy that is characteristic of true disciples of Jesus Christ. Peacemakers thwart the adversary.

Let us as a people become a true light on the hill—a light that “cannot be hid.”²³ Let us show that there is a peaceful, respectful way to resolve complex issues and an enlightened way to work out disagreements. As you demonstrate the charity that true followers of Jesus Christ manifest, the Lord will magnify your efforts beyond your loftiest imagination.

The gospel net is the largest net in the world. God has invited all to come unto Him, “black and white, bond and free, male and female.”²⁴ There is room for everyone. However, there is no room for prejudice, condemnation, or contention of any kind.

My dear brothers and sisters, the best is yet to come for those who spend their lives building up others. Today I invite you to examine your discipleship within the context of the way you treat others. I bless you to make any adjustments that may be needed so that your behavior is ennobling, respectful, and representative of a true follower of Jesus Christ.

I bless you to replace belligerence with beseeching, animosity with understanding, and contention with peace.

God lives! Jesus is the Christ. He stands at the head of this Church. We are His servants. He will help us to become His peacemakers. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. Matthew 5:9; see also 3 Nephi 12:9. The Savior’s promise to peacemakers is that they will “be called the children of God.”

2. Matthew 5:39; see also 3 Nephi 12:39.

3. Matthew 5:44; see also 3 Nephi 12:44.

4. See John 13:34.

5. John 13:35.

6. See Moroni 7:3–4.

7. See Mosiah 3:19.

8. 3 Nephi 11:29. John the Revelator saw in vision that the devil would come to earth “having great wrath” (Revelation 12:12).

9. 3 Nephi 13:24.

10. Articles of Faith 1:13.

11. See Moroni 7:3–4.

12. Moroni 7:47.

13. See Moroni 7:48.

14. See Moroni 7:48.
15. See Moroni 7:45; see also 1 Corinthians 13:4–5.
16. Mosiah 18:8.
17. Mosiah 18:9.
18. Being a peacemaker does not require us to agree with the ideas or beliefs of others.
19. See Helaman 3:33–36.
20. See Alma 24:19; 25:14.
21. See 1 Corinthians 13:11.
22. See Doctrine and Covenants 109:22, 26.
23. 3 Nephi 12:14.
24. 2 Nephi 26:33.

The Answer Is Always Jesus Christ

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

April 2023 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

My dear brothers and sisters, we have been spiritually fed during these last two days. The choir music was superb. Those who have spoken have been instruments for the Lord. I pray that you will seek for the Holy Ghost to guide you in your study as you contemplate the truths taught from this pulpit. They have truly been heaven sent.

One week from today is Easter Sunday. It is the most important religious observance for followers of Jesus Christ. The main reason we celebrate Christmas is because of Easter. The Come, Follow Me lesson this week will prompt you to study the Savior's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, His cleansing of the temple, His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, His Crucifixion, His glorious Resurrection, and His subsequent appearances to His followers.¹

Savor these sacred verses and find every way you can to thank our Heavenly Father for sending us His Only Begotten Son.² Because of Jesus Christ, we can repent and be forgiven of our sins. Because of Him, each of us will be resurrected.

I also invite you to study again the account of the Savior's appearance to the Nephites in the Americas, as recorded in 3 Nephi. Not long before that appearance, His voice was heard among the people, including these words of supplication:

"Will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?

"... Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive."³

Dear brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ extends that same invitation to you today. I plead with you to come unto Him so that He can heal you! He will heal you from sin as you repent. He will heal you from sadness and fear. He will heal you from the wounds of this world.

Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Learn more about His Atonement, His love, His mercy, His doctrine, and His restored gospel of healing and progression. Turn to Him! Follow Him!

Jesus Christ is the reason we build temples. Each is His holy house. Making covenants and receiving essential ordinances in the temple, as well as seeking to draw closer to Him there, will bless your life in ways no other kind of worship can. For this reason, we are doing all within our power to make the blessings of the temple more accessible to our members around the world. Today, I am grateful to announce our plans to build a new temple in each of the following locations:

- Retalhuleu, Guatemala
- Iquitos, Peru
- Teresina, Brazil
- Natal, Brazil
- Tuguegarao City, Philippines
- Iloilo, Philippines
- Jakarta, Indonesia
- Hamburg, Germany
- Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada
- San Jose, California
- Bakersfield, California
- Springfield, Missouri
- Charlotte, North Carolina
- Winchester, Virginia
- Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

My dear brothers and sisters, I bear witness that Jesus Christ directs the affairs of His Church. I testify that following Him is the only way to enduring happiness. I know that His power is descending upon His covenant-keeping people, who are “armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.”⁴ I so testify, with my love and blessing for each of you, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See Come, Follow Me—For Individuals and Families: New Testament 2023, 57–60.

2. See John 3:16.

3. 3 Nephi 9:13–14.

4. 1 Nephi 14:14.

Think Celestial!

By President Russell M. Nelson | President of the Church

October 2023 | Sunday afternoon session | [Link](#)

Your choices will determine where you will live throughout eternity, the kind of body with which you will be resurrected, and those with whom you will live forever.

My dear brothers and sisters, I am deeply grateful to speak with you today. At my age, each new day brings wonderful as well as challenging surprises. Three weeks ago, I injured the muscles of my back. So, while I have delivered more than 100 general conference addresses standing, today I thought I would do so sitting. I pray that the Spirit will carry my message into your hearts today.

I recently celebrated my 99th birthday and thus commenced my 100th year of living. I am often asked the secret to living so long. A better question would be “What have I learned in nearly a century of living?”

Time today does not allow me to answer that question fully, but may I share one of the most crucial lessons I have learned.

I have learned that Heavenly Father’s plan for us is fabulous, that what we do in this life really matters, and that the Savior’s Atonement is what makes our Father’s plan possible.¹

As I have wrestled with the intense pain caused by my recent injury, I have felt even deeper appreciation for Jesus Christ and the incomprehensible gift of His Atonement. Think of it! The Savior suffered “pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind”² so that He can comfort us, heal us, rescue us in times of need.³ Jesus Christ described His experience in Gethsemane and on Calvary: “Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore.”⁴ My injury has caused me to reflect again and again on “the greatness of the Holy One of Israel.”⁵ During my healing, the Lord has manifested His divine power in peaceful and unmistakable ways.

Because of Jesus Christ’s infinite Atonement, our Heavenly Father’s plan is a perfect plan! An understanding of God’s fabulous plan takes the mystery out of life and the uncertainty out of our future. It allows each of us to choose how we will live here on

earth and where we will live forever. The baseless notion that we should “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us”⁶ is one of the most absurd lies in the universe.

Here is the great news of God’s plan: the very things that will make your mortal life the best it can be are exactly the same things that will make your life throughout all eternity the best it can be! Today, to assist you to qualify for the rich blessings Heavenly Father has for you, I invite you to adopt the practice of “thinking celestial”!⁷ Thinking celestial means being spiritually minded. We learn from the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob that “to be spiritually-minded is life eternal.”⁸

Mortality is a master class in learning to choose the things of greatest eternal import. Far too many people live as though this life is all there is. However, your choices today will determine three things: where you will live throughout all eternity, the kind of body with which you will be resurrected, and those with whom you will live forever. So, think celestial.

In my first message as President of the Church, I encouraged you to begin with the end in mind. This means making the celestial kingdom your eternal goal and then carefully considering where each of your decisions while here on earth will place you in the next world.⁹

The Lord has clearly taught that only men and women who are sealed as husband and wife in the temple, and who keep their covenants, will be together throughout the eternities. He said, “All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise ... have an end when men are dead.”¹⁰

Thus, if we unwisely choose to live telestial laws now, we are choosing to be resurrected with a telestial body. We are choosing not to live with our families forever.

So, my dear brothers and sisters, how and where and with whom do you want to live forever? You get to choose.¹¹

When you make choices, I invite you to take the long view—an eternal view. Put Jesus Christ first because your eternal life is dependent upon your faith in Him and in His Atonement.¹² It is also dependent upon your obedience to His laws. Obedience paves the way for a joyful life for you today and a grand, eternal reward tomorrow.

When you are confronted with a dilemma, think celestial! When tested by temptation, think celestial! When life or loved ones let you down, think celestial! When someone

dies prematurely, think celestial. When someone lingers with a devastating illness, think celestial. When the pressures of life crowd in upon you, think celestial! As you recover from an accident or injury, as I am doing now, think celestial!

As you focus on thinking celestial, expect to encounter opposition.¹³ Decades ago, a professional colleague criticized me for having “too much temple” in me, and more than one supervisor penalized me because of my faith. I am convinced, however, that thinking celestial enhanced my career.

As you think celestial, your heart will gradually change. You will want to pray more often and more sincerely. Please don’t let your prayers sound like a shopping list. The Lord’s perspective transcends your mortal wisdom. His response to your prayers may surprise you and will help you to think celestial.

Consider the Lord’s response to Joseph Smith when he pleaded for relief in Liberty Jail. The Lord taught the Prophet that his inhumane treatment would give him experience and be for his good.¹⁴ “If thou endure it well,” the Lord promised, “God shall exalt thee on high.”¹⁵ The Lord was teaching Joseph to think celestial and to envision an eternal reward rather than focus on the excruciating difficulties of the day. Our prayers can be—and should be—living discussions with our Heavenly Father.

As you think celestial, you will find yourself avoiding anything that robs you of your agency. Any addiction—be it gaming, gambling, debt, drugs, alcohol, anger, pornography, sex, or even food—offends God. Why? Because your obsession becomes your god. You look to it rather than to Him for solace. If you struggle with an addiction, seek the spiritual and professional help you need. Please do not let an obsession rob you of your freedom to follow God’s fabulous plan.

Thinking celestial will also help you obey the law of chastity. Few things will complicate your life more quickly than violating this divine law. For those who have made covenants with God, immorality is one of the quickest ways to lose your testimony.

Many of the adversary’s most relentless temptations involve violations of moral purity. The power to create life is the one privilege of godhood that Heavenly Father allows His mortal children to exercise. Thus, God set clear guidelines for the use of this living, divine power. Physical intimacy is only for a man and a woman who are married to each other.

Much of the world does not believe this, but public opinion is not the arbiter of truth. The Lord has declared that no unchaste person will attain the celestial kingdom. So when you make decisions regarding morality, please think celestial. And if you have

been unchaste, I plead with you to repent. Come unto Christ and receive His promise of complete forgiveness as you fully repent of your sins.¹⁶

As you think celestial, you will view trials and opposition in a new light. When someone you love attacks truth, think celestial, and don't question your testimony. The Apostle Paul prophesied that "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."¹⁷

There is no end to the adversary's deceptions. Please be prepared. Never take counsel from those who do not believe. Seek guidance from voices you can trust—from prophets, seers, and revelators and from the whisperings of the Holy Ghost, who "will show unto you all things what ye should do."¹⁸ Please do the spiritual work to increase your capacity to receive personal revelation.¹⁹

As you think celestial, your faith will increase. When I was a young intern, my income was \$15 a month. One night, my wife Dantzel asked if I was paying tithing on that meager stipend. I was not. I quickly repented and began paying the additional \$1.50 in monthly tithing.

Was the Church any different because we increased our tithing? Of course not. However, becoming a full-tithe payer changed me. That is when I learned that paying tithing is all about faith, not money. As I became a full-tithe payer, the windows of heaven began to open for me. I attribute several subsequent professional opportunities to our faithful payment of tithes.²⁰

Paying tithing requires faith, and it also builds faith in God and His Beloved Son.

Choosing to live a virtuous life in a sexualized, politicized world builds faith.

Spending more time in the temple builds faith. And your service and worship in the temple will help you to think celestial. The temple is a place of revelation. There you are shown how to progress toward a celestial life. There you are drawn closer to the Savior and given greater access to His power. There you are guided in solving the problems in your life, even your most perplexing problems.

The ordinances and covenants of the temple are of eternal significance. We continue to build more temples to make these sacred possibilities become a reality in each of your lives. We are grateful to announce our plans to build a temple in each of the following 20 locations:

- Savai'i, Samoa
- Cancún, Mexico

- Piura, Peru
- Huancayo, Peru
- Viña del Mar, Chile
- Goiânia, Brazil
- João Pessoa, Brazil
- Calabar, Nigeria
- Cape Coast, Ghana
- Luanda, Angola
- Mbuji-Mayi, Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Laoag, Philippines
- Osaka, Japan
- Kahului, Maui, Hawaii
- Fairbanks, Alaska
- Vancouver, Washington
- Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Roanoke, Virginia
- Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

The Lord is directing us to build these temples to help us think celestial. God lives. Jesus is the Christ. His Church has been restored to bless all of God's children. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

1. See John 6:38.

2. Alma 7:11.

3. See Alma 7:12.

4. Doctrine and Covenants 19:18.

5. 2 Nephi 9:40.

6. 2 Nephi 28:7.

7. It may prove to be easier to repent and progress spiritually here, while our spirit is united with our body, than in the next world between the time we die and are resurrected. As Amulek taught the apostate Zoramites, "This life is the time ... to prepare to meet God" (see Alma 34:32–35).

8. 2 Nephi 9:39.

9. See Mosiah 4:30, where King Benjamin admonishes his people, "If ye do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe the commandments of God, and continue in the faith ... , ye must perish."

10. Doctrine and Covenants 132:7; emphasis added.

11. Of course, your agency cannot override another's agency and the attendant consequences. I was desperate to be sealed to my parents. However, I had to wait until *they* chose to be endowed, when they were more than 80 years of age. Then they were sealed as husband and wife, and we children were sealed to them.

12. The scriptures repeatedly testify that the gift of eternal life is only possible through the merits, mercy, and grace of the Savior Jesus Christ (see, for example, Moroni 7:41; see also 2 Nephi 2:6–8, 27).

13. See 2 Nephi 2:11.

14. See Doctrine and Covenants 122:7.

15. Doctrine and Covenants 121:8.

16. See Isaiah 1:16–18; Doctrine and Covenants 58:42–43.

17. 1 Timothy 4:1. The next verse continues, "Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (verse 2). Paul also declared that all who "live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12).

18. 2 Nephi 32:5; emphasis added. If we will ask, we may "receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge" (Doctrine and Covenants 42:61).

19. See Russell M. Nelson, "Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2018, 96.

20. This is not to imply a cause-and-effect relationship. Some who never pay tithing attain professional opportunities, while some who pay tithing do not. The promise is that the windows of heaven *will be* opened to the tithe payer. The nature of the blessings will vary.

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